CHURCHILL'S THREE-DAY CRISIS

Behind the debate in Parliament. Cabled by Claude Cockburn

NEW MASSES

FEB. 10, 1942 15c

THE ALLIED WAR SCHEDULE

The global strategy Hitler fears. A Western Front—when? By Joseph Starobin

BACKWASH OF PEARL HARBOR

How the appeasers are using the Roberts Report. By Bruce Minton

I AM A MOSCOW AIR RAID WARDEN

A firsthand account of Soviet ARP. Organizing the apartment house and factory. By Sonia Tsvietov

PEARL BUCK'S GREATEST NOVEL

Samuel Sillen reviews "Dragon Seed"

Lieuts. George Welch and Kenneth Taylor honored for shooting down six Japanese planes in Hawaii.

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Between Ourselves

WATCH for NM on the New York newsstands one day earlier next week—since Thursday is a holiday, we shall appear on Wednesday instead.

NM will print shortly a section from Erskine Caldwell's forthcoming book, *All-Out on the Road to Smolensk,* written during and since his recent stay in Russia. The book, which will be published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce, is a condensed but fast-moving picture of leading Soviet personalities and of the Soviet people in an epic period of struggle. Another forthcoming piece which we are glad to announce is one by the famous anti-Nazi German writer and exile Ludwig Renn, which analyzes Soviet, as opposed to Nazi, strategy. Other articles which we can promise for early publication are: a discussion by Morris U. Schappes of what the colleges are doing in the war effort; an analysis by Abraham Unger of the Dickstein bill to establish a second class citizenship; and an article on Soviet trade unions by Maurice Dobb.

A more recent article, Milton D. Ellis' "Tennessee Trek" (January 20) brings some comment and a postscript from a "Southerner-at-large" —as follows: "I was born in Virginia (*not* a First Family!) just over the border from Tennessee and I lived five years in the latter state, but then I've lived all over the South and still don't call any particular place my home. What I liked about this piece by Mr. Ellis is that it takes a realistic tone toward a region that is usually either just cursed or gushed over. There are lots of hopeful things, especially since we started fighting the Axis, and plenty of bad ones still that need working on. One thing we have to watch out for is that people understand the importance of fighting any of Herr Hitler's pals in this country. Not long ago I was in North Carolina and heard arguments about Bob Reynolds; while many people curled up with shame just to hear him referred to as 'our senator,' there were some who argued that Bob was American and that was 'the difference' between him and Adolph. It's a mighty small difference if you ask me—and if you ask a lot of North Carolinians too. I hope you will have some more articles by Mr. Ellis. He says a lot and he says it plainly."

Comment still comes to us on Alvah Bessie's recent article, "Morale for Six-Year-Olds." "Most parents," remarks a Long Island subscriber, "look to various children's magazines for information and guidance, but I feel that the question dealt with by Mr. Bessie is so much a part of the whole war situation that NM readers will be grateful for an expression by its magazine." Still another reader suggests that we follow up on Bessie's piece with a discussion of the toys that children prefer these days, the vocabulary they use, etc. A swell idea—we hope to do an adequate job with it soon.

A New Yorker who attended the pageant "Salute to Negro Troops" writes—a little belatedly, he admits —to add a word to Samuel Sillen's review in our issue of three weeks ago. "I am glad to see such things get the space they deserve in NM and in the few other periodicals that play them up. It wasn't only that I got an enormous thrill out of the pageant for its talent and artistry alone. It was the meaning of the thing. I felt it in a way that is very hard to describe—the excited feeling all the way through of unity, love, patriotism—the words convey a lot to me because they are colored by my memory of the affair itself, but when I look at them in type they aren't enough. For a while in that opera house I was almost willing to believe that there was no such thing as racial discrimination in this country, that Negro blood was not being refused in the humanitarian enterprise of helping our wounded soldiers and sailors, that Jim Crow had been buried, and every Hitler prejudice was banished from our midst. Of course I woke up the next day and happenings since have helped keep me awake; such happenings as the Missouri lynching, for example, or the Alexandria 'riots'—or the official Red Cross decision that it will accept Negro blood but will 'segregate' it from the white! Just the same, 'Salute to Negro Troops' is not counter-balanced, or its meaning obscured, by such happenings. On the contrary, it makes you more eager than ever to go out and do things about the ugly aspects of the picture, to wash them out and paint the picture whole as it should be, as we got a glimpse of it the night of the pageant."

We can't give much of a report yet on our call for 1,000 volunteer Minute Men to extend the NM audience, since the call was issued only last week. Some very fine letters are coming in from recruits, though. One or two have exceptionally practical suggestions which we will try to put into effect. And this week we offer a suggestion of our own, in the form of a question: *What do you know?* Never mind trying to figure that out—it's on the back cover of this issue.

On Friday night, February 20, NM will present a special program of film shorts dealing with the war. Subjects include the attack on Pearl Harbor, the defense of Moscow, America's call to arms, a film dealing with British defense "somewhere in England," the Red Army smashing the Nazis, and guerrilla fighting on the Eastern Front. William Blake will speak on "Behind the Nazi Lines." The program will take place at Irving Plaza, New York City. All tickets are fifty cents and seats can be reserved for that price if bought in advance at the Workers Bookshop, 50 East 13th St.; at Bookfair, 133 West 44th St.; or the NM office, 461 Fourth Ave.

Who's Who

ERNEST PENDRELL is a Philadelphia newspaperman who has contributed to NM before. . . . Frank T. Baker is an expert on Latin-American affairs. . . . Isidor Schneider was formerly literary editor of NM and is the author of *From the Kingdom of Necessity.* . . . Dorothy Brewster is a professor of English at Columbia University. . . . Herbert Aptheker is the author of a number of books and pamphlets on Negro history. His articles and reviews have frequently appeared in these pages. . . . Claudia Ricker is a graduate student, specializing in English. . . . Marian Armstrong is a West Coast school teacher. . . . Mary Menk is a musician living in New York.

THIS WEEK

NEW MASSES, VOLUME XLII, NO. 6

February 10, 1942

Churchill Weathers the Storm *by Claude Cockburn* . . . 3
Soviet Air Raid Warden *by Sonia Tsvietov* 4
Backwash of Pearl Harbor *by Bruce Minton* 7
Current Exhibits 9
Singapore's Chances *by Colonel T.* 10
Pop Gets a Letter 11
The Allied Timetable *by Joseph Starobin* 12
Gropper's Cartoon 14
Martin's Girl Bessie *by Ernest Pendrell* 11
The Rio Conference *by Frank T. Baker* 17
Editorial Comment 18

REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Good Earth's Warriors *by Samuel Sillen* 21
Limited Poll *by Isidor Schneider* 22
Quack, Quack *by Joy Davidman* 24
Where Do We Go from Here? *by Dorothy Brewster* . 24
Honors for a Few *by Claudia Ricker* 25
Rediscovered Treasure *by Herbert Aptheker* 26
Child's Saga *by Marian Armstrong* 26
Primer on Incendiaries *by James Knight* 26
Brief Review 26

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Hecht in the Valley *by Alvah Bessie* 27
The Week's Films *by Joy Davidman* 28
Militant Music *by Mary Menk* 30
Progressive's Almanac 31

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CHURCHILL WEATHERS THE STORM

How the British Premier came off in Parliament's war debate. The reason for Cripps' popularity. Scant satisfaction for the Axis.

London (by cable).

JUST when everyone thought the big debate was over, it turned out that it was still going on. Just when one set of newspapers was announcing that the whole ministerial problem on the production front had been fixed up with Beaverbrook in supreme command and Stafford Cripps as Supply Minister, it turned out that this wasn't in the bag at all—not then at any rate. The story behind that is interesting.

Two-thirds of the way through the parliamentary debate it became obvious to everyone, including Churchill himself, that some major concessions would have to be made to the critics. The vote of confidence, of course, would have been given—and given pretty unanimously—to Churchill whether he had made concessions or not. But it would have been worth very little under those circumstances. It would have been, so to speak, a purely negative vote, reflecting merely the fact that, on the one hand, the critics were bitterly in disagreement on a possible successor. And on the other hand, nobody wanted to give material for Goebbels' sermons on the "disunity" existing in Britain in such marked contrast to the "unity" exemplified by the sudden deaths, grave stomach troubles, and sudden retirements of the German generals. Still, that would have been a very unsatisfactory vote of "confidence." Therefore, toward the end of the three days it was allowed to become known in the lobbies that a decision had been made about the appointment of a Production Minister. It was taken for granted that Beaverbrook would get that job. And again it was allowed to become known that Sir Stafford Cripps had been offered the post of Minister of Supply.

But as all this had had to be hurriedly arranged with the debate still going on, there had not, it seems, been time either to sort out the thorny questions of War Cabinet personnel and relative responsibilities involved, or even to get an answer from Cripps as to whether he would take the job. When the answer did come it was in the form of a question: namely, just what would be the powers of the new Supply Minister relative to Minister of Labor Ernest Bevin (who is a member of the War Cabinet); and Lord Beaverbrook, who is in the War Cabinet now and would obviously remain in it if he became coordinator-in-chief of the production effort with special reference to Anglo-American production and supply problems? Well, the answer to that one was that nobody had yet thought of the exact answer.

Meantime, Mr. Bevin himself was also presumably asking some questions. For example, if the new super-Ministry of Production is going to be superior to the Ministries both of Supply and of Labor, is the idea perchance in some quarters on the right, where Mr. Bevin is not much liked, to remove Mr. Bevin from the War Cabinet? These queries alone indicate how complex the problem is.

AS I suggested last week, there seems to be no doubt whatever now that Cripps, though he refused the first offer of the Supply job because nobody could tell him just what the job amounted to, is not now by any means as anxious as he was a couple of weeks ago to make a flying trip to India before getting into the heart of politics here. He might still do that, failing anything better. But he has left no doubt in the minds of many who claim to know him well that what he would really like would be the India office—with a pretty clear understanding in advance that he could change the viceroy if he liked. This is not to say that he would propose to replace the viceroy with a "man of the left." On the contrary, I believe that Cripps himself is not persuaded that such a man as Sir John Anderson might not be just as capable of carrying out a progressive policy in India as he was in the service of a very different policy a few years ago. As regards Cripps' personal position, there is no doubt that at the moment he enjoys a very high popularity comparable in several ways to that still largely enjoyed by Anthony Eden. The public, in its exasperation at the "old gang" and "the men of Munich," welcomes with tremendous and sometimes even quite uncritical warmth, anyone clearly associated in any way with sustained opposition to the old gang. And in Cripps' case, his popularity is itself an expression of the public demand for closer practical cooperation with the Soviet Union. For the public looks on Cripps as one of the real architects of the Anglo-Soviet alliance.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT temporarily settling the personnel question raised by the promise to create something like a Production Ministry may come from Downing Street at any moment. It will not and cannot immediately solve the other problems involved. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to conclude that the big debate was lacking in positive results. The promise of a Production Ministry is in itself an advance, even though the machinery that emerges may not at once prove all that the critics wanted and believe necessary. Second, this was the first time that the critics clearly divided themselves for all to see into two bodies: a large one composed of people honestly engaged in trying to force before the attention of the Prime Minister a series of demands which they believe must be met if the war is to be carried forward effectively; and a much smaller one composed of extreme right wingers who think this is a good opportunity to snipe at and even undermine not only Churchill, but the whole system of coalition government as we have known it here since the spring of 1940. The second group got badly defeated and exposed. The first group, on the other hand, made a great deal better progress than they had for the most part expected. And this does not apply only to the production front. It applies to those strategical questions which have been so sharp a matter of controversy.

Here it is harder to talk of results for the obvious reason that these are essentially military questions. But I strongly have the impression that the result of the debate is going to be a very serious shaking up in the general planning and thinking of war strategy. Above all, a speeding up in action. And despite Mr. Churchill's derision of those alleged amateurs who had suggested the possibility of a second front, I find that in responsible quarters there are more open minds on the question than there were a few months ago.

CLAUDE COCKBURN.

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SOVIET AIR

First of a series on Allied experiences in civilian deals with the bombs and incendiaries. How

Civilian fire-fighting squad in Moscow

Moscow (by mail).

ONE very important fact about the war on the Eastern Front commands the attention of the Allied world: despite long months of defensive fighting and actual siege, neither Moscow nor Leningrad has been seriously damaged by enemy air raids. Indeed, Moscow and Leningrad show relatively few scars, while damage to the cities of Odessa, Kiev, and Smolensk came only after the fascists entered them, not during the tense battles which raged before. Seeing this, the peoples of other countries similarly faced with the possibility of fascist air raids or already under attack, are naturally asking: "How did the Russians do it?"

The Air Raid Precautions (ARP) and civilian defense program of the Soviet government, as developed in Moscow, Leningrad, and the other cities along the farflung war front, is guided by two basic principles. (1) The national government's responsibility for safeguarding the life and property of the "rear front"—the civilian populations, their homes, and the factories so vital to war production. (2) The civilian's responsibility to participate actively in the defense program and the specific measures adopted by the government and the military command. The successful fusion of these two basic tenets is chiefly responsible for the fact that Moscow and Leningrad were not demolished.

Not that the fascist warbirds did not try. Starting with June 22, and intensifying their attempts as their bases moved closer in the developing offensive, the fascist airmen flung themselves furiously against the skylines of the Soviet cities. And had the Soviet people, under the leadership of their government and military commands, been less prepared, history would have had to record a far grimmer story than is fortunately the case today.

For the government, in accordance with the first principle of its civilian defense program, threw around its principal cities a whole beltwork of anti-aircraft (AA) defenses. Night after night enemy planes beat their propellers and cracked their wings against these defenses; and scores of them were brought down in smoke and flames by our Soviet air fighters.

IN THE first intensive air raids (beginning early in July) we in Moscow got our first taste of nightly trips to the shelters. Yet out of the successive waves of fascist planes which tried to reach the city, only a relatively small number got through the second and third lines of AA defense. And, within ten days or so, on the basis of these nightly experiences, the defenses were improved and strengthened. After that, we got air raid alarms at lessened intervals, so strong was the confidence of the military command in these defenses.

It became a common experience for us to awaken during the night to the sound of AA guns going full force in the distance. We would listen for a moment with bated breath; then—reassuring ourselves that all must be well since there had been no alarm—we would turn over and go back to sleep. The next morning we would read in *Pravda* that enemy planes had been brought down "on the approaches to the city." Often during the daytime enemy planes on reconnaissance would be brought down in the suburbs without any general alarm having been sounded. Alarms were sounded when isolated planes succeeded in breaking through the outer defense lines and danger of actual bombardment was imminent. But these planes were forced by AA fire to fly at very high altitudes, drop their loads indiscriminately, and attempt a hasty retreat. Fascist planes have, of course, left their mark—but mainly on small wooden structures in the outskirts and on some hospitals and school buildings.

Flowing from the government-military policy of effective all-out defense of the lives and well being of the people is the necessary corollary—namely, the closely knit and well organized ARP network which reaches into every home, shop, and factory in the Soviet capital. The civilian defense program of the Soviet government bases itself directly upon the *existing* mass organizations of the people. The house committees which manage the apartment buildings, the trade unions which concern themselves with the social and economic well being of the working people, the youth and children's organizations in the schools—through these organizations every man, woman, and child has been reached, his interests protected, his services mobilized.

Moreover, our ARP is based upon *the participation of every individual at his natural point of interest:* at home, where he and his family live, and at his place of work. Every apartment

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RAID WARDEN

defense. A Muscovite describes how her city apartment houses and factories were protected.

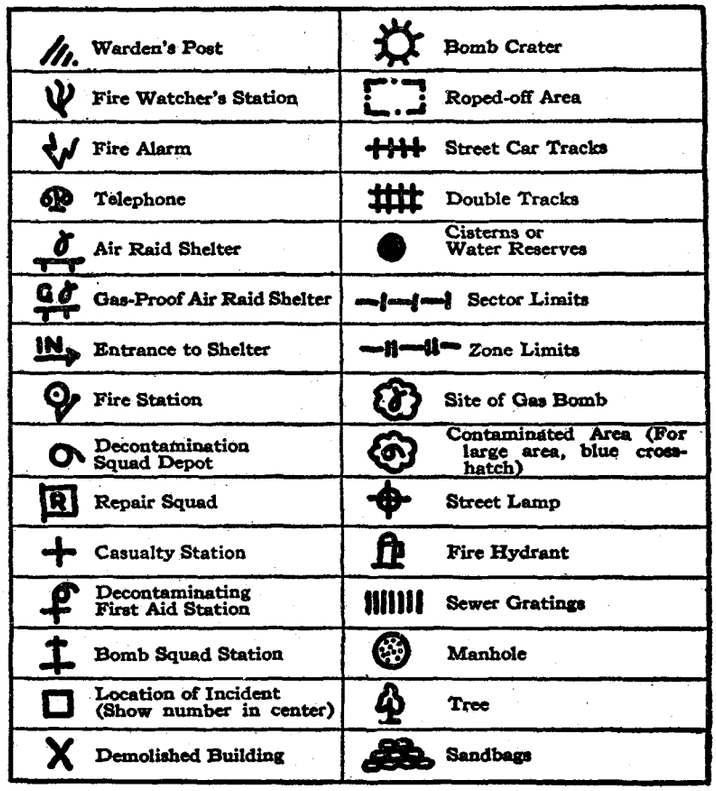
house, office, store, institution, and factory has its ARP "general staff" elected from among the regular local inhabitants. In addition there is sometimes an expert from the district or city ARP staff. Every Soviet citizen, male and female, from sixteen to sixty years of age, gives one night (or day) a week to ARP at his place of residence and equal time (in addition to his regular working shift) at his place of work. On the same basis, within the home and at the place of work, courses in first aid, anti-chemical defense, civilian military training, industrial training, etc., are organized. Check-up of everyone's participation is systematic.

THUS the whole city and every citizen in it are geared and mobilized for that moment when the air raid alarm is sounded. And there is no mistaking or sleeping through that alarm when it is given! Every factory whistle in the city, every railway locomotive in the stations, every boat in the river, nowadays sounds its siren or blows its whistle *only when there is a general air raid alarm*—and at no other time!

But more than that. The radio has played a decisive role in ARP—keeping the people informed as to how to prepare themselves. For the actual alarms, an ingenious system was worked out. Every single home and apartment here is wired for radio; and the most common use is made of the radio amplifier system. Here cheap loudspeakers, plugged into the wall socket, bring the programs of the leading station into every home. The station to which we are plugged in goes off the air at ten PM. But these amplifiers are kept on, twenty-four hours a day, week in and week out. For, as soon as the alarm is required, the loudspeakers come on in a calm but urgent voice: "Citizens! Air Raid Alarm!" This is repeated three times. It is followed by a two-minute pickup of the factory, train, and boat whistles which are simultaneously shrilling outdoors. Naturally, if the alarm comes before ten PM, the regular program is cut off, the alarm given, and the station then goes off the air; if after ten o'clock, the silent loudspeaker comes to life just long enough for the alarm and then goes dead. The "all-clear" is given in the same manner. All shelters and ARP staff headquarters are similarly equipped with these loudspeakers.

ARP duties of the Soviet citizen fall into the following main categories: (1) blackout duty; (2) fire spotters and fighters; (3) house guards; and (4) shelter duty.

Moscow went into permanent nightly blackout on the first day of the war, and its more than 4,000,000 inhabitants have lived in blackout every night since then. Shaded lamps and blue lights are used freely indoors behind heavily curtained windows. Shops remaining open in the early winter twilights operate behind blacked-out windows and in dim blue lights. The streets are inky dark—not a single street lamp or traffic light in the whole city. Autos travel with pinpoints of blue lights, angled down upon the road directly ahead. Traffic is guided by dark-clothed militia (civilian police) who are barely discernible in the darkness except for the baton in their hands with its shaded green and red light at either end. Theater performances start at five-thirty and six PM instead of the former



A chart of standard symbols used by American air raid wardens in the preparation of maps of their posts.

eight-thirty and nine o'clock pre-war schedules. Social visiting is confined to the early evening hours and Sundays. An absent-minded pedestrian striking a match on the darkened street is immediately hissed at from all sides. Even lighted cigarettes must be shielded in the cup of the hand.

From dusk until dawn, in shifts of four hours each, the "blackout sentries" patrol the street, courtyards, and back yards of every building. As in all other ARP duties, these patrols are composed of tenants on duty before their own building, workers before their factory, teachers and students at their school, actors and stagehands at their theater, cashiers and floorwalkers at their shop, office clerks and managers at their institution, doctors and nurses at their hospital. No matter what the "station of life," each serves his ARP duty. The "blackout sentries" are on the watch for every pinpoint of light. Faulty blacked-out windows are reported to ARP offices in the building concerned. Violators are politely informed; but if the warning goes unheeded after two warnings, the policeman on the "beat" is called in. The violator is taken to the police.

The danger of fire is one of the greatest problems during air raids. And in the very first days of the war Moscow became a city of sand and water. Everyone gave his Sundays and after-work hours to shovel sand and fill barrels of water. Attics and lofts of all buildings were filled in three and four feet deep with sand. Large barrels of water were placed in all corners. When air raids were still something we in Moscow only speculated about, orders came through to every apartment tenant in the city *that every room had to have a couple of bags, boxes, or buckets of sand, as well as water.* In addition each of us was responsible for having stationed outside our door, in the hallway, sand and water at all times. House committees checked up on the fulfillment of this task, and "put-off-until-tomorrow" tenants were speeded into action by being fined for failure to comply. In this manner, no matter where incendiaries might fall, and regardless of whether the fire hose or city engines

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were available or not, the volunteer fire-fighters of the house could swing into action with sand and water literally at their feet at every turn.

Only men were accepted for this work. They volunteered one night a week. If there is no alarm, they are lucky and sleep through the night (fully dressed, however, just in case). If there is an alarm, those on duty for that night arrive in split-second time in the attic of their apartment house or loft of their factory. There they stand guard throughout the raid, darting out upon the roof to smother the incendiaries before the fire spreads. These spotters no longer stand on the roof itself, as they did in the first days of air raids. The danger to life and limb of falling shrapnel from the anti-aircraft guns proved to be a more immediate danger than the bombs themselves. Quick and alert action by the fire brigade can put those spluttering little fireballs out of action in no time. The roof of our house has been the recipient of as many as fifteen and twenty incendiaries a night, but we have not yet had a single fire in the building. Moscow's fire-spotters—mild professors, bespectacled bookkeepers, husky mechanics by day—working independently of the city fire squads, have saved the city from widespread ravages from fire.

When the alarm is sounded, general activity starts in every house. The fire-fighters, on their way up to the attic, pass those not on duty on their way down to the shelters. On each floor women take their posts along the corridors. These are the house guards who go on duty only in time of actual raid. Their duties are four-fold. They immediately check up on every apartment on their "beat" to see that everyone is out of the rooms and on his way to the shelter. (Instructions from the city military command require everyone not on duty to take shelter, leaving all rooms unlocked: this latter facilitates getting to points of trouble in case of fire, etc.) The guard then checks up in every apartment to see that sand and water are available. If not, mental note is made to report the violation to the house ARP staff; but meanwhile the guard fills the bathtub as a precaution. She then cruises her territory, on the lookout for stray incendiaries which may come through the ceiling or in through the windows. In such an event she gives the alarm, meanwhile falling to with sand and water until help arrives. Finally, the guard has to keep an eye out for petty thieves, as well as suspicious figures who might be fooling around the windows with matches or flashlights.

AIR raid shelters, of course, play a major part in the whole setup of civilian defense. And here our experience indicates that—whatever the pros and cons of shelter effectiveness or however true it may be that almost nothing is proof against a direct hit—*shelters are a basic necessity to civilian morale!* We have read that much is being written and said abroad about the merits and demerits of various types of shelters. But we in Moscow have been under strict instruction from the first days of the war to report to officially designated shelters during air raids. In all cases these are the basements and cellars of large, modern, multi-storied buildings. Absolutely bombproof? Probably not. But they are safe from almost anything else.

All large shops, stores, office buildings have such shelters. People caught on the street, or in trams or trolleys, are guided by policemen (as well as large arrows painted on the sides of buildings) to the nearest shelter. No one is allowed to stand in doorways or on the street. No one is allowed to "run quickly" ten or fifteen blocks because he "happens to live close by." All take shelter immediately.

An exception is made for factories and important production points. These continue to work until a carefully worked out local alarm system warns that their particular locality is in danger. Only then do the workers take to shelter.

House staffs, usually under instruction from the tenants themselves, have made the shelters in apartment houses as comfortable as possible. Wooden floors have been built, or rugs laid, over concrete floors. Tiers of wooden bunks have been built along the walls. The tenants bring their own blankets.

In each shelter are two people in authority, both assigned by the local staff: a trained Red Cross aide, with first-aid emergency kit, and the captain on duty responsible for "morale" and "order." She it is who sees that there are always candles on hand, in case the electricity goes off; that there is room for all; that the aged and sick are properly taken care of. She sees to it that mothers and children have gone to the special shelters assigned to their use, and that fresh drinking water is available. She allows no one to leave until the "all-clear" has been sounded. In short, she represents the authority of the civilian defense system within the single shelter.

Moscow is, of course, a highly congested city in which the large modern apartment house, with its special adaptability to the organization of shelters and ARP duty work, is predominant. But on the outskirts of the city there are still areas of small wooden cottages. The people of these single-family homes are assigned to the closest shelter in large buildings in the neighborhood. Where none exists, these people grouped together and collectively built deep trenches covered with heavy logs, lumber, or concrete. Inside wood-burning stoves have been set up, wooden benches and bunks built. Fire watching in these areas is organized on the same basis as elsewhere, volunteers covering the whole block instead of a single building.

Moscow has another set of air raid shelters—the beautiful air-conditioned, mosaic-walled, and marble-floored stations of its subway system. This is reserved for the use of mothers and children. Subway trains stop running at nine PM. Mothers and children are allowed to enter at that time and make themselves comfortable for an uninterrupted night. Others are allowed to enter only if they are caught nearby in an actual raid. The trek of women and children to the subways, their blankets under their arms, is now a common sight. Thus the children are saved from the harrowing experience of being awakened, hurriedly dressed, carried to shelters, and later brought back in the small hours of the morning. They are attended here by nurses, Red Cross aides, and doctors.

As I said before, equally as important as the question of physical safety is the indisputable fact that well organized collective shelters have proved important in maintaining the high morale of the people. In the moment of the raid, there is nothing one needs so much as the proximity of one's fellow men. The fear of being hit or killed is not clearcut or uppermost in one's mind at such times. Panic and fear is rather the product of frustration, of helplessness, of being alone.

Occasionally, if an explosion was terribly close, and the house swayed back and forth before settling back into its grooves, we would give a collective gasp. But we somehow *didn't* give way to that desire to scream or laugh uncontrollably. We felt the courage and strength and calm which comes from being together, from being organized for action. We felt like soldiers momentarily "off duty" resting up for the next "watch." The military front and the civilian rear became and remain one united, confident fighting front. This was the aim of the civilian defense program of the Soviet government. That aim has been fully realized.

SONIA TSVIETOV.

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BACKWASH OF PEARL HARBOR

Will America suffer another surprise? The responsible policies and men. Bruce Minton describes events since the Roberts report.

Washington.

THE report on the tragedy of Pearl Harbor handed to the President by Associate Justice Owen Roberts has caused a great deal of discussion in Washington, not all of it calculated to promote unity. Wherever I go, I hear off-the-record complaints that there has not been bold enough stress given to the real lessons of Pearl Harbor. And these remarks carry an undertone of fear lest the nation fail to take the drastic lessons sufficiently to heart.

This does not mean, of course, that a certain positive satisfaction has not greeted the report. Its publication has been generally accepted here as a distinctly healthy sign. The realistic, critical tone, the willingness to place blame for dereliction of duty where it belonged, are welcomed as steps in the right direction. Perhaps, as was pointed out by a government economist, a little more emphasis should have been given to the responsibility of those in high government positions who failed to make sure that orders were carried through to the letter, of those who failed to convince Admiral Kimmel and General Short of the dangerous imminence of an Axis attack on any and every American outpost. But, he added, in all fairness it must be realized that an investigation such as the one conducted by the Roberts commission is primarily concerned with the facts: it is on the basis of these facts and other available information that conclusions should be drawn by the people, the press, and the administration.

So far, the type of conclusions publicly discussed have caused a good deal of private concern. Too obviously, events at Pearl Harbor were not solely the result of technical mistakes attributable to commanding officers. True, technical failures contributed a large share to the severity of the debacle. But it should be borne in mind that laxity—criminal as it was—only expressed larger attitudes of far more import to the safety of the nation. These attitudes have not as yet been examined with the frankness necessary if the United States is to be secure against another avoidable disaster.

It is, moreover, not enough to admit that Pearl Harbor resulted largely from policies of appeasement. The flat statement serves merely as after-the-fact balm to our national conscience. Far more important is the recognition that these

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policies that brought useless death to thousands and the destruction of vital planes and ships and other equipment, were not bombed away at Pearl Harbor. The price would have been steep if the tragedy had written "finis" to the appeasers. But lamentably even this was not the case.

The actions of the State Department toward Japan for the months before the attack served almost as beacon lights to the enemy planes roaring over Diamond Head that dreadful Sunday morning. This raking up of accusations against the appeasers—who up until the bombs actually fell had absolute confidence in their ability always to find a new formula to buy off Japan—is not done for the sake of recrimination. If the lesson had been learned, perhaps it would be well to write off the past. But that group in the State Department which banked on "peace" in the Pacific—at a price of capitulation and retreat—still does not admit its mistake. The same men today are following almost the identical "line." Those who thought they could deflect Japanese aggression in the direction of Vladivostok and the Maritime Provinces, those who couldn't believe that fascism would attack the South Pacific or bomb American territory, are playing the same kind of game after the fact. They worry constantly over Soviet victories, expending more concern over the advances of an allied nation than they do over the very serious news from Singapore and the Dutch East Indies. They are more energetic in their distrust than they are in prosecuting the war. The attitude hardly lends strength to the war effort.

And too, these same men are busily bringing appeasement up to date. Though details must be withheld for the moment, it is all too true that the junta which once eagerly approved shipments of oil and scrap iron to Japan is now busily approving shipments of vital materials to European "neutrals." Sugar, of which there is a serious shortage, and oil have been shipped to Spain. Foodstuffs—if nothing else—are shipped, secretly and fortunately in limited amounts, to North Africa. Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, even the Vichy regime in North Africa, are able to buy certain supplies in this country, and to get deliveries—because a handful of officials in the State Department considers these countries "neutral." What happens to the goods after they are landed? Is it possible that the desperate, hard-pressed Nazis do not seize such imports?

In NEW MASSES of Dec. 2, 1941 (a week before Pearl Harbor), I wrote a report telling how ostensibly frozen funds were being used by the "neutrals" for the benefit of the Axis. A few high-placed bureaucrats were readily giving comfort to the enemy despite the President's announced determination not to allow the Nazis to use "the financial facilities of the United States in ways harmful to national defense." That was before we declared war. The situation has hardly changed since that time.

The excuse offered—or rather whispered—for these concessions is the old chestnut about keeping the "neutrals" friendly to the anti-Axis forces. Treat these four or five countries right, so the argument goes, and they will stay out of the Axis camp. Eventually, when they are ready, these countries will join up with the democracies. There is no answer to such speculation—except common sense.

DESPITE the fact that the United States and the Soviet Union are equal members of the United Nations, the diehards cling to their anti-Soviet complex. They have not been able to stop the growing volume of shipments to the Soviet Union. But they have hopes of canceling whatever gains have been made in improving relations with the USSR, and certainly to prevent the attainment of a joint military alliance. Martin Dies, as usual, is doing his bit. I sat in the House the other day, listening to his diatribe. His clique was gathered round: Rep. Howard Smith of Virginia came hurrying in from the cloak room; Rep. Clare Hoffman of Michigan craned forward not to miss a word; Rep. E. E. Cox of Georgia ran up to adjust the microphone for his hero, and then sat in the front row to lead the applause. And Dies responded by denouncing "Stalin's counterfeit ring"—whatever that might be—and blandly lying about Soviet "violations" of the recognition agreement of 1933. He intimated that the United States should break off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. No one answered, no one quoted, as evidence of Dies' slander, the facts given in former Ambassador Davies' book, which each congressman had received free. Instead, Dies was permitted to spread disunity, to discourage the war effort, while his appeaser friends clapped and nodded.

Dies said: "I now make this prediction, Mr. Speaker, and I do so deliberately, that unless this government adopts an alert attitude toward this whole question there will occur on the West Coast a tragedy which will make Pearl Harbor sink into insignificance compared with it." What was "this whole question" to which he referred? None other than his smear campaign against the progressive movement. In other words, Dies accused the anti-fascists, the labor unions, the progressive movement including the Communist Party, of causing Pearl Harbor. In the hands of the appeaser, the fruits of appeasement were used to pelt the anti-fascists.

Only Rep. Vito Marcantonio took issue. For the rest, the members remained silent or agreed fulsomely—only reminding the poll-tax bruiser from Texas that his attack on civil liberties at this time seemed "embarrassing" and "unnecessary." Even those who hate Dies were cowed by his bluster. Is this the lesson of Pearl Harbor?

Nor was Dies alone. Every appeaser seized on the Roberts report to take the offensive against the war effort. Hamilton Fish (whose secretary, George Hill, was convicted of perjury when he refused to admit his intimate connections with the Nazi agent, George Sylvester Viereck) told the House that Pearl Harbor was an indictment of lend-lease. He called for a stop to all help to our Allies, Britain, China, the Soviet Union. He was echoed by Representative Hoffman and by others, formerly spokesmen of America First—by those, in fact, directly responsible for the Hawaiian disaster. Even some not known as appeasers fell into the trap. Representative Celler censured the CIO, the American Civil Liberties Union, and "other well intentioned organizations" because these groups in days gone past opposed a wire tapping bill directed against the labor unions—and thereby, said Celler, were responsible for the sneak attack.

Daily, in every newspaper, appears the slogan "Remember Pearl Harbor." But there is a growing sentiment that to remember is not enough. The need is to *understand,* to carry understanding into action. And action implies cleaning our house of those who are industriously preparing for future Pearl Harbors. I choose for my preferred list of those who can best be spared: (1) The slanderers of the Soviet Union, undermining the war effort. (2) Those who grudge aid to our Allies and attack the policy of lend-lease; (3) those who continuously wage war against the unions and the progressives at home trying to disrupt the very basis of our war effort. (4) And above all, the appeasers, wherever they are, whoever they may be, however they may disguise their opposition to the anti-fascist war.

BRUCE MINTON.

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CURRENT ART SHOWS

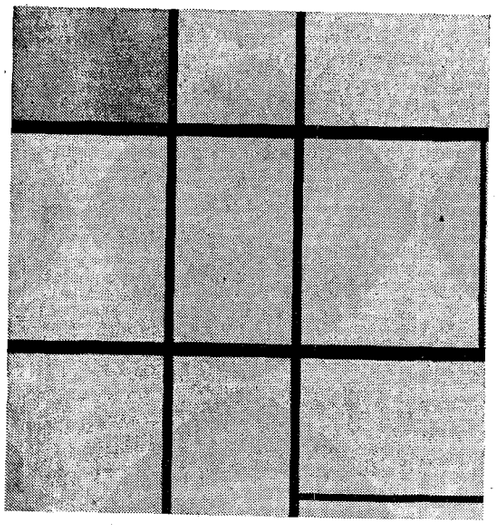
in New York

(Art Calendar on page 26)

(Above) MOTHER AND CHILD, by *Jacques Lipchitz, at the Buchholz Gallery.*

(Right) THE PASSING SCENE, *by Jack Levine, at the Museum of Modern Art.*

(Below) NOVEMBER, GREENLAND, *by Rockwell Kent, at the Wildenstein Gallery.*



(Above) ABSTRACTION, *by Piet Mondrian, at the Valentine Gallery.*

(Right) A MURAL DECORATION, *by David Margolis, for the new Russian War Relief Headquarters, 160 7th Ave.*

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SINGAPORE'S CHANCES

Can the island fortress hold out? The long view. Our navy in action.

Two months of extremely rapid campaigning through the jungles of Malaya have brought the Japanese armies to the Strait of Johore. Across its mile or so of murky waters lies the island of Singapore. The great British naval base, on which building began in 1925, at a cost of at least some £40,000,000, or more than two hundred million dollars, is now under siege. The whole world watches to see whether Singapore can bleed the Mikado and delay his further advance.

As a naval base, Singapore was capable of holding the entire British fleet in its Johore basin. But, of course, this is now only a figure of speech. As long as the Japanese have such superiority in the air, no naval commander would risk the entire fleet or any substantial part of it in the basin. In this respect, therefore, the Japanese have little to fear.

All along the western shore the array of British artillery can prevent the invaders from consolidating their coastal positions, for how long depends on whether airplanes can reduce these guns and their crews. Unfortunately, the main British naval guns are pointed eastward to the sea, in expectation of invasion from sea. That is just what Japan did not do, and therefore the heavy gun emplacements will probably not figure in the immediate defense of the island. Unless, as is possible, the Japanese try to outflank the island by occupying the many points in the Straits of Malacca and the sea lanes from Java.

The island itself has some 3,000,000 people, of whom 700,000 live in Singapore City at the eastern tip. According to Governor Shenton Thomas, reinforcements have recently arrived. But all in all, total fighting power, including Australian and Indian troops who got across the causeway from Malaya, cannot exceed 75,000.

As for airfields, the island has many, but whether enough planes have arrived to challenge the Japanese in the air remains to be seen. Although the main water supply came from Johore, across the now shattered causeway, Singapore is more fortunate in this respect than Hongkong, since it has water reserves on its own territory. And food has probably been stored away for the emergency, at least until reinforcements arrive. This is really the key question: whether enough have arrived to enable the island defenders to organize themselves for a long siege.

On the whole, the war continues to favor Japan in the western Pacific. By land she holds the inner lines of communication along the Chinese coast, French Indo-China, Thailand, and now Malaya. True, the railroads between Shanghai and Canton, and Canton and Na-cham are harassed by guerrillas. But at least from Hanoi, right through to Johore Bharu, the Japanese are unchallenged.

And these routes are made more secure by the very important Japanese drive into Burma, which began last week and has now succeeded in reaching Moulmein. With this stroke the Japanese are not only threatening Rangoon, less than 150 miles away, and therefore the Burma Road also, but they are covering their operations in Malaya and Thailand.

Land losses cannot have been very great so far. Probably some two or three divisions were accounted for by British guns and bayonets as well as sickness, swamps, assorted snakes and crocodiles in the jungle. If we include the 25,000 men that were lost on the transports sunk by the United States Asiatic Fleet in the Straits of Macassar, Japanese manpower losses runs higher. But all in all, including loss of face at Luzon, they may not be missing more than 50,000 men.

In the air the Japanese can still spread their aerial canopy over wide regions. Their assault on the Dutch part of Borneo continues at Balik Papan; their positions in the New Guinea and Solomon Islands, the "outer belt" of their operations, seem to be consolidated despite Australian counter-attacks at Rabaul.

In fact, this past week, the Japanese felt secure enough to strike out against the important Dutch naval base at Amboina, which commands the approach to Java. They have also made their furthest penetration of the eight week campaign by tackling the Dutch end of Timor, an island which lies between Australia and Japan's goal, which is Java.

But all this is of value only if it helps them improve their position in terms of naval bases. On the sea lanes, which are indestructible and therefore the best highways of aggression for Japan, her lines are still greatly over-extended. Here real bases are few and far apart. Cam-ranh, the great French naval base, is still undeveloped. Cavite, at Manila, is still being protected by that great soldier and strategist, General MacArthur.

This is why the Japanese need to take Singapore as intact as possible. For without it, the lines stretch at least 3,500 miles from Yokohama. Proof of this over-extension came in the famous battle of the Macassar Straits in which half a hundred ships of all kinds were sunk, among them at least one Japanese battleship. A great Japanese armada was en route to invade Java and didn't quite make it. They were coming from Davao, very likely, off the end of the Philippines. And this was not quite near enough.

So much, then, for the short view. How about the longer view?

In the January 20 issue of New Masses I concluded a survey of the Pacific as follows: "If, therefore, the war is made as costly for Japan as possible in Malaya, Singapore, and the Dutch East Indies, even though the strategic situation favors Japan, and if, as we must, the United States delivers the weapons of war to China and Australia, producing on a scale that Mr. Roosevelt has described—and all this while Hitler is getting his deserts in Europe—then Japan can be squeezed out of her ellipse in the southwestern Pacific and her defeat made certain."

Battles like MacArthur continues to carry out in Bataan come within these "ifs." So does the Straits of Macassar affair, which gave the Japanese "*miserere* of the sea lanes." So will Singapore come within the "if" of making the war as costly as possible for the invader, the longer it stands the siege.

As for the second "if," the delivery of materials to China and Australia, this becomes of the most urgent importance. That is why defending Burma, with all the troops that China has volunteered, is so important. And so also is the latest report of American fighting ships raiding the Japanese islands in the Marshall and Gilbert zone. These Japanese islands lie athwart our main sea routes to Australia. Breaking up their bases and preventing their raiders from putting out to sea means to guarantee that our supplies will get to Australia in time.

In the longer run Japan will be outproduced by the democratic coalition. And she will be outfought by great land armies, equipped with air superiority, and operating from the land theaters of China and Australia. And meanwhile, Hitler is getting his "deserts" in Europe, with a vengeance.

Colonel T.

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Pop gets a letter

"So that Irving's children, Tillie's baby, can enjoy the life maybe you and I missed." Meyer Wolozansky's 18-year-old sailor boy writes to his father.

It frequently happens that an unstudied speech, a letter, a chance conversation captures a truth which experienced writers find hard to get down on paper. The letter we print below does just that, we feel. It is from eighteen-year-old Hyman Wolozansky, of the Bronx, N. Y., who has just enlisted in the Navy. It was written to Hyman's father, Meyer, a mailman, who was so proud of it he took it down to the New York Sun which published it. The mailman had evidently heard some plaints from neighbors that he should not have signed the papers at the recruiting station for his young son. The sailor, apprised of this, wrote the following letter.

THE EDITORS.

WE'VE got a great bunch of guys here. They answered their country's call. You might meet plenty of yentas and busybodies that'll tell you, "Why did you let your son go?" But don't you let them get you down. You can well keep your head high. You've got a son that's willing to give up his daily life, leave his friends, his family, his home, and go into the war—a war in which thousands of men are toiling.

Toiling for what? To make this world a better place to live in. To stop racial hatred. To get better conditions for us people. To rid the world of rats who are plundering, killing, causing agony and suffering to millions of innocent men, women, and children.

Remember, Pop, I've got the great Red Army on my side, I've got the English people, the gallant Chinese, the Free French, the conquered nations of the world, the great American boys—Greenberg and Joe Louis. Yes, I've got them all on my side. And we will win and I'll come home knowing that I did my part.

So keep your chin up, Pop! You've got nothing to be ashamed of. Be proud of yourself, your country, and your son! I won't fail you, Pop. When in the battle I'll think of you and fight for you and even if I have to die, I'll go down smiling, knowing I've done my part to help end this suffering, to put an end to this madness, to stop once and for all this agony, and killing.

If I can have a part in this, then I'm proud of myself and I'm sure you will be proud of me too. "Remember Pearl Harbor" and the mothers and fathers who lost their sons in the sneaky attack. "Remember Wake Island" and the marines who gave their lives for freedom. Remember the Jews in Germany and how they've suffered. Remember the Poles, Norwegians, Austrians, Czechs, French. Remember them all—the slaves of Hitler! This is the showdown. This is the fight for freedom. This is the chance to show that a free people will win. This is the chance to feed the hungry, to see that they don't starve again. This is the chance to build and not tear down—so that Irving's children, Tillie's baby, everybody's children can enjoy the life that you and I may have missed. This is it.

I, with the soldiers, sailors, marines, and great fighters from all over this world, will fight arm to arm, shoulder to shoulder, until victory is ours. So keep your chin up, Pop! Snap back at those yentas. This is your hour to be happy. This is your hour to be proud. Keep smiling. I'll be back some day, and when I get back I can march down the street knowing that I helped to keep this street free! So keep your chin up, Pop, and pretty soon the sun will rise again—and life, liberty, and happiness will be the world's forever.

Your sailor son and pal,

Hyman.

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THE ALLIED TIMETABLE

The schedule Hitler fears most. Joseph Starobin discusses phases of global strategy that have developed since the Roosevelt-Churchill talks. What about the Western Front?

WITH Winston Churchill's report to the British Parliament last week, and with the announcement of the joint munitions, raw materials, and shipping boards, functioning under the United States-British War Council in Washington, it is clear that some basic decisions of strategy have been made. In our country there is nothing like a general debate on the course of the war. The nearest equivalent might be considered the criticism and comment on the Roberts Report, but this hardly touches on the global aspect of war strategy. Therefore it seems necessary to estimate for ourselves just where things stand.

THE GREAT overshadowing fact of the past two months is the Declaration of the United Nations. Twenty-six states have pledged themselves not to make a separate peace until Hitlerism in all its forms has been wiped off the earth. They are pledged to work with all their resources against whichever member of the Axis they have already engaged. And they are pledged to the general principles of the Atlantic Charter. Among these states is the key nation of Asia, which is China. Among them are the two truly-world powers of the Eurasian continent, Great Britain and the Soviet Union. And alongside these, our own country stands at last.

Of the five industrial centers of the globe, three are now ranged against the other two. And these three, in concert with China, have attracted the peoples of Latin America, as well as the allegiance of millions of people still under Hitler's heel. The Declaration is not just a document, a matter of parchment and wax. It expresses the living reality which has come to pass in the last six months, the fact that the anti-Hitler forces are at last on the same side of the fence, and are fighting together against the most formidable aggregation of humanity's enemies that humanity has ever faced.

This is the union for which all progressives fought when the war itself might have been averted. It is the union that was so hard to achieve after the war began to spread. It is a remarkable, precious, inspiring reality. And all the more so because everyone knows that despite differences of social structure, and historical level of development, this is the only association of powers that stands the chance of breaking the grip of fascism and ushering in a better world.

THE Declaration of the United Nations defines an agreement on war aim, the crushing of the Axis. But of itself, the document does not bear on the problem of *how* the war shall be fought, at what speed, and in what way. It does not bear on the problem of strategy. In approaching this problem, the one fact which stands out is the unequal development of the war. Different powers stand in a differing geographic relationship to the opponents. The mobilization of war potential has proceeded unevenly. An effective world strategy means to recognize this unevenness and to try to overcome it in the most rapid fashion, to take advantage of this unevenness in a way that will win the war most directly.

FOR EXAMPLE, the key nation of China, with perhaps 10,000,000 men under arms, has not been able to undertake a decisive engagement with Japan. The task of building a heavy industry, able to produce the heavy implements of war, is beyond China's immediate grasp. China depends for material assistance on Russia, whose help, according to Sir Stafford Cripps, is still coming. China depends on Britain and our own country, for which the security of the Burma Road is vital. With this help China can keep going; she can harass the Japanese severely, as at Changsha last month; she volunteers her manpower for the defense of Burma and India. But she cannot undertake such decisive actions as would end the war quickly. None of the other Pacific powers is in a substantially different position.

And this in itself, apart from the fact that Germany is the heart of the Axis and more directly menaces the vital regions of the democratic powers, determines the defensive character of the Pacific struggle for a considerable period of time. Defense of every Pacific position is vital and urgent for the purpose of weakening and delaying Japan. But in the present context of the war, such action cannot either defeat Japan utterly or defeat the Axis as a whole.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the Soviet Union, the only first-class industrial power on the entire land area of Europe and Asia, admittedly the barrier to a German-Japanese control of the "cradle of the world" and its surrounding waters. Undeniably, the Russians were more adequately prepared for this war than any other nation. Undeniably the war would be lost if Russia were reduced to a fragment of a nation in central Siberia, enabling the German and Japanese armies to join forces in the Middle East and India. Undeniably also, the Russians have delivered the first really major defeat which the Axis has suffered in the last seven years.

And now that Hitler has grabbed hold of the bear but cannot let go, it is admitted on all sides that the Eastern Front is decisive, the front of "great battles and great hopes." In his recent interview Sir Stafford Cripps says that the Russians will be ten times stronger this spring than last. And judging from Stalin's speech of last November, the Russians intend to push on, to disintegrate as many of Hitler's forces as possible with the perspective of smashing Hitler in 1942.

HOW HAVE BRITAIN and our own country adapted themselves to the circumstance that, while the war in the Pacific cannot be won immediately, our Soviet allies are making every effort to smash Hitler this year?

To begin with, it is clear that Britain and the United States have entered into a "most intimate" association. In welcoming the British Prime Minister, Walter Lippmann observed that the "great mistake of our lives—from which flow all the awful consequences we face—was that, having won the war together with the British, we dissolved the partnership, went our separate ways and even became rivals. This is the mistake which Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt are now trying to repair." We may differ with this estimate of America's mistakes, but the one which Lippmann singles out is certainly being repaired. A joint world strategy council has been formed. American and British high officers confer in Washington daily. Three boards have been set up to pool British and American resources, and it is obvious from Mr. Churchill's speech that he considers

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this intimate association (what everyone hesitates to call an alliance) as the major achievement of his trans-Atlantic voyage.

In itself this is an historically inevitable development, whose consequences can only be positive in terms of winning the war. It could not have been otherwise that the two countries of the anti-Hitler coalition which are capitalist in structure should draw closer to each other. And this is all to the good in the sense that the release of our military and naval energies depends on a definite and intimate cooperation with the British.

For example, our Navy could not really defend the Panama Canal, without access to British bases in the Caribbean; and in the offensive operations against the Azores and Dakar, the use of these bases may make all the difference between failure and success. The same is true in the Pacific: British, Australian, and Dutch bases make it possible for our fleet to venture beyond our main base at Pearl Harbor, especially since Cavite at Manila became untenable so quickly. Our successes at the Straits of Macassar would not have been possible except by the most intimate coordination of our ships and friendly bases. Nor would these bases do the British any good, if, while their fleet is preponderantly concentrated in the Mediterranean and the North Sea, the American Navy were not able to use them. It is characteristic that we are sharing the vital outpost of Iceland with the British, and it is characteristic that our first expeditionary forces landed on British territory, Mr. De Valera notwithstanding.

The same can be said on the economic side. The duplication of British and American shipping routes is notorious, and anything to eliminate such wastefulness will be worthwhile. Up in Canada a year ago factories and skilled men were idle because of conflicts between British and American machine tool designs. Often the raw materials for aircraft engines came from across the Great Lakes, while special tools had to be brought across the perilous Atlantic. Integration of British, American, and Canadian efforts can only be of positive value.

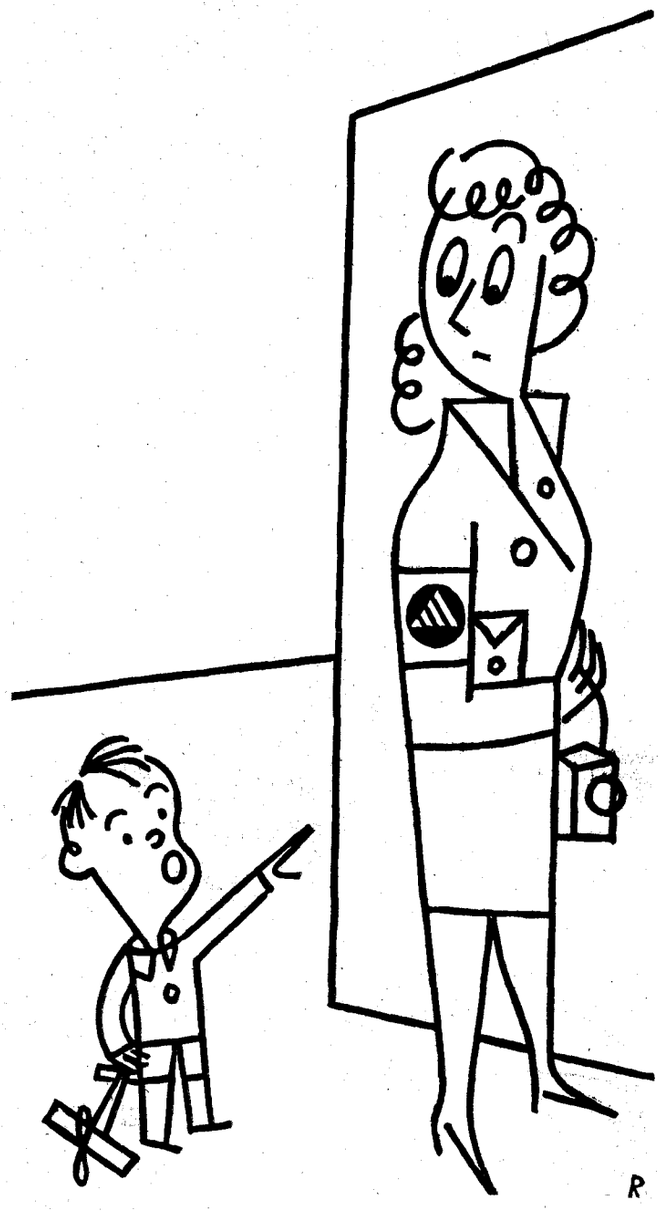
OF COURSE, some people make a rather narrow and special interpretation of this alliance. People like Anne O'Hare McCormick, of the New York *Times,* simply chortle with glee over the thought that Mr. Churchill came to us, and not the other way around. They talk so rapturously of Washington as a "world capital," that one would think they were interested in this close association with England only in so far as it seems to emphasize the ascendancy of the United States.

Others make a special interpretation of the alliance in terms of how it may enable the Anglo-Saxon powers to play the exclusive and dominating role in the peace. At least, there is much talk to this effect on the platform and in the press. Of course, such people would be outraged if the Russians had the bad taste to talk about Moscow as the future world capital. Indeed, it would not only be considered unrealistic, but downright unsportsmanlike for the Kremlin to nominate itself as the arbiter of the peace.

In a recent issue of the *New Republic,* Max Lerner takes issue with this "balance of power" kind of thinking. "I am concerned with all this, not on Russia's account," he says, "but only because it affects the democratic future for America and the world. An Anglo-American condominium is not the answer to the winning of either the war or the peace. The answer lies in deepening the democratic reach until it includes in its partnership all of the peoples firmly against the Nazi cause."

SO MUCH for one phase of the Roosevelt-Churchill discussions. As far as a basic strategic decision is concerned, all the evidence is that the European front has been recognized as decisive. Colonel Knox put it well, even though undiplomatically, when he suggested that Germany is the prime mover of the Axis. Unless the war is won in Germany, it will not matter much what happens in the Pacific, whereas if it were won in Germany, the Pacific victory might be delayed but it would be inevitable. As Knox himself pointed out, this does not imply a simple yielding up of positions to Japan. It implies fighting as well as we can for as much as we can, and the most obvious way of doing that involves releasing the energies of the semi-colonial peoples especially of India and China, something which has not yet begun to take place. But all this, within the fundamental proposition that Hitler is the worm in the core of the apple.

IT IS CLEAR, then, that important organizational measures have been taken in Washington and a basic agreement has been reached that Hitler is our main antagonist, both of which developments are positive. *But the thing which stands out is the disparity in the timetable of the Allies.* In his speech to



"And remember, mama, you can recognize a Heinkel 113 by its simple tail unit comprised of a single fin, rudder, tailplane, and elevator."

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Congress and in his remarks up in Canada, Mr. Churchill visualized the crest of the Allied offensive as coming in 1943, whereas our Soviet friends seem to be trying to finish things off in 1942. Here is the gravest shortcoming in the United Nations strategy, and it brings us to the issue of the second front.

LAST SEPTEMBER many people felt that the demand for a second front on the continent of Europe was motivated by the desire to relieve the distress of the Russians rather than by the interests of the war as a whole. But in reading Churchill's speech to the Commons, it becomes clear that if the Russians had not been able to hold the line of the River Don, the British might well have regretted their hesitation to open a second front; for the Nazis would have poured into the Caspian-Levantine front, as Churchill called it. They might have, in conjunction with Japan reached central Asia, a disaster beside which the defeats in the Pacific and in Libya pale into insignificance. In other words, relieving the Russians last September was certainly in the British interest. Fortunately the Russians found within themselves reserves of strength; and in beating back the German armies from Rostov they not only broke the back of the German offensive, but they compensated for Britain's own hesitations with reference to the Middle East.

Another rebuttal last September to the idea of a second front was the argument that German fortifications and manpower in western Europe were too strong; second, that if the Russians were defeated, Britain would be left to face an invasion helplessly, and, third, that the arms, airplane, and munitions supply either in Britain or in the United States did not warrant the gamble. The best that could be done, Churchill tells us now, was to stave the Japanese off by negotiation, to strengthen the Nile valley by the Libyan attack, and to send materials to Russia as quickly as possible.

But in retrospect, in view of what we now know, it will be admitted that even at *that* time, under *those* circumstances of German strength in the west, a coordinated thrust against the continent might have brought on Hitler's crisis much earlier. It might have made the Japanese think twice before striking in the Pacific, and might have changed the face of the war.

CONSIDER the situation today. I cannot discuss the technical details, but Churchill himself tells us that Britain is producing twice the munitions supply she did last summer and much more than the United States. On the other hand, the Office of Facts and Figures tells us in the recent "Report to the Nation" that "Army warplane production has been stepped up to the point, where with Britain, we will soon exceed the plane output of the Axis countries." In other words, while it is true that we will be stronger a year from now, the argument that we have no arms, or that Britain would be helpless if the continental invasion proved difficult does not stand up under examination. Especially when we remember that the German armies and their leadership are not what they used to be.

All reports indicate that Hitler has withdrawn the largest part of his troops from the west. In his speech of December 11 Hitler assured his armies that next spring they would get *"new"* arms for another offensive, which implies that he will be relying next spring almost completely on this winter's production. All the more reason, then, to concentrate our forces now, to take advantage of Hitler's crisis of material and morale. As Max Werner declares in the *New Republic* for January 12: "The primary task of the Allies is to use all means to put the German army in the most difficult situation. *Strategic coordination with the Soviet Union now assumes a new aspect.* (Italics mine—JS)

Let us suppose, now, that we fail to follow Mr. Werner's advice, and delay action until 1943. What are some possible consequences?

One is that Hitler will hold some kind of front in Europe, and open up against us on the Atlantic littoral down to Dakar. In conjunction with rapid Japanese advances in the western Pacific, this would confront both Britain and ourselves with a real Atlantic crisis. It would mark the fiasco of our policy toward Vichy and might nullify the achievements at Rio.

Another is a German smash through to the Middle East, in conjunction with a drive into Egypt from Libya, and that in conjunction with a Japanese drive into Burma. This would strain every British resource in the Middle East. It would certainly make it less likely that the war can be kept away from India and India can be kept out of the war as General Wavell is trying to do. It might be beyond Russian ability to prevent such a development. And then we should all rue our failure to have confronted Hitler on the continent.

A third possibility, of course, and one which I have heard suggested as something of a gamble, is the idea that the war will be stalemated in Europe and Asia until the main weight of British and American power will make itself felt. This is the hope that Germany and the Soviet Union will cancel each other out by mutual exhaustion. It is the idea expressed by the Munichman Colonel Moore-Brabazon in London last summer.

Finally, some people visualize the possibility that Germany's power will be disintegrated in 1942, largely by the efforts of the Red Army, assisted with whatever materials we can get to the Russians as pledged. This possibility seems particularly distasteful to those banking on Moore-Brabazon's hopes.

Naturally, no one can pretend to estimate which of these will actually come to pass. But certainly, it is the first, namely, the perspective that Germany and Japan can still place us all in our most serious crisis, which should spur the efforts of all the Allies.

IT ALL comes back therefore to the basic consideration: how to take advantage of the uneven development of the various fronts and throw everything we have into winning the war this year. It is on this question that the strategy discussions in Washington have to be supplemented by equally far-reaching discussions with our Soviet allies.

It was Hanson Baldwin who wrote just the other day that "A strategical planning-liaison board body, tentatively dubbed the United States-British War Council, or strategy board, was created following the visit of Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and should serve as the nucleus for a broader council that may eventually evolve. There is as yet no really adequate strategical liaison with Russia," Baldwin continues, "partly because Russia is fighting her own self-contained war, partly because of Russian secrecy and reluctance to commit herself to joint endeavors." For all I know Mr. Baldwin is right about the Russians. After all, he has been right so many times in the past. Maybe it's up to us simply to insist that the Russians abandon their "self-contained war." Maybe we are the ones to bring to Mr. Litvinov's attention the wisdom of "joint endeavors."

But seriously speaking, our job is to put everything aside for a maximum war production in the shortest space of time. It's up to us to dovetail the resources we have with the 1942 timetable, to open that front on the continent which is the great stroke that our grand alliance really commands.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

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MARTIN'S GIRL BESSIE

She hobnobbed with the Nazis for years and did Goebbels' work in the Philadelphia high schools. Martin Dies in the role of tender protector.

Philadelphia.

IT WAS late in the day, getting dark, when a US deputy marshal started from his office to serve a subpena on Mrs. Bessie Burchett of Philadelphia, summoning her to appear before the Dies committee. As he made for the door, a colleague called after him, "Better not go up there tonight if you don't know that section. Mrs. Burchett is a dangerous woman."

This woman who can frighten a United States deputy marshal is a short, dumpy, sixty-three-year-old former schoolteacher. She carries a 25-caliber revolver in her purse and a 38-caliber strapped to her thigh, with the permission of the Philadelphia Police Department. She is "Two Gun Bessie," a Nazi propagandist, anti-Semite, union-buster, Red-baiter, and an active organizer of the Mothers and Daughters of Pennsylvania which attempts to undermine morale in the armed forces. Her group is one of the phony "mother and daughter" outfits condemned by the Army and Navy for the kind of letters they write to boys in camp and to their families.

FOR seven years Bessie has been conducting her Nazi campaign. The Dies "investigating" committee skipped her, along with other fascists, while it hounded honest men. It still hounds honest men, in an attempt to break national unity, but Mr. Dies needs another appropriation for his purpose and when the matter of appropriations comes up, people want to know why the committee doesn't investigate some Quislings for a change. So Dies, with quite a fanfare, asked that Bessie be brought before him. Nobody was fooled, least of all Bessie.

It was announced over the radio on Sunday, January 11, that Bessie Burchett and fourteen other witnesses would be called. The fourteen (plus two since added) were Bessie's friends from five bogus "patriotic" groups, and all were to be summoned "duces tecum," that is, with their documents. On Saturday, the day before the official announcement, Bessie already knew that she was going to be called—she told her neighbors that she was going to Washington the following Wednesday. But by Tuesday night she still hadn't been subpenaed. She had left her Bucks County farmhouse on the road to Philadelphia, taking her documents along. To load all the papers in her car, she and a handyman had to make six trips from the house to the automobile. The next day Bessie was located, with the help of local newspapermen, and the subpena was served, though not before she had pulled one of her guns on a cameraman who tried to take her picture. Her load of documents never reached Washington—she had been tipped off in plenty of time to dispose of them.

On Thursday Bessie did appear before the Dies committee, but what went on wasn't revealed to the public. Unlike the inquisitions to which progressives are subjected, the hearings were secret—perhaps because the gentleman from Texas couldn't risk airing the similarity between his and Bessie's opinions.

In 1935 Bessie Burchett, then head of the Language Department of the South Philadelphia High School for Girls, began using her classrooms to spread Nazi material sent her by the German Propaganda Bureau. Among other things she warned her Jewish students that their people would not long "be permitted to hold the jobs and have the opportunities which they now have in this country," and advised parents to keep their children out of school until every teacher with a trace of "non-Aryan" blood was dismissed. This sort of thing went on until March 1941, when the Board of Education finally yielded to repeated demands from trade unions and parent-teacher organizations for her dismissal. Even then the board might not have acted if Bessie hadn't overstepped the bounds of propriety—as for example writing on the blackboard about President Roosevelt: "No place in deepest hell is black enough for this liar and murderer." Her dismissal, however, was made considerably less painful by the grant of a life pension.

Besides, Bessie had a number of extra-curricular activities to keep her happy. She organized the Anti-Communist Society, now the "Mothers and Daughters," and conducted its cozy little hate sessions at the Philomusian Club. It is said that she got her armament from Kern Dodge, then Director of Public Safety, who has been listed as a vice chairman of one of the sessions. There is more than enough evidence that Bessie's Society was simply a front for her Hitler activities. It received, in addition to other propaganda, syndicated news bulletins published by "World Service," Erfurt, Germany, and has been revealed as one of a national network of fascist organizations which the German Propaganda Bureau urged people to "support." Before me is an envelope postmarked March 27, 1939, which was taken from Bessie's wastebasket; it was mailed in Munich and originally contained "printed matter"—only one sample of the stuff which she received regularly.

She also organized, sponsored, or cooperated with groups like the "Preservation of Constitutional Rights Committee," whose members conducted raids on Philadelphia synagogues and beat up Jewish men and women on the streets. These raids were led by the "Bliszard boys"—four members of the same family—who had a Christian Front type of organization here which received some rather cursory attention from the FBI. Bessie herself has since 1934 been a key personage in the Nazi, fascist, Coughlin groups here. It is no secret that she has hobnobbed with Nazis in this country. A few years ago she attended a birthday rally for her idol, Hitler, in the company of Fritz Kuhn and G. Wilhelm Kunze of the Bund. She was also one of the "distinguished and honored guests" at a 1939 celebration (ostensibly in honor of George Washington) held by the German War Veterans in the USA, where the swastika was displayed, the Horst Wessel sung, and "Heils" rang through the hall. Indeed, Bessie has boasted that the Bund is "composed of noble and upright citizens."

BUT if any proof is still needed of Bessie Burchett's ties with Berlin, it is right in her own credo—the call she issued two years ago for an American National Socialist Party modeled on Hitler's Nazi Party. The symbol she suggested was that of an American Indian proudly giving the Hitler salute, against the background of a huge swastika.

Nearly three years ago Philadelphia unionists turned over to the FBI a complete file on Bessie Burchett's activities, but nothing was done about it. Why? And why is the Dies committee so tender with her now?

ERNEST PENDRELL.

"What Do You Know?"
Please turn to the back cover

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REPORT ON RIO

What happened behind scenes at the Conference of the Republics. How unity against Hitler was achieved. The debate with Argentina.

WHEN the diplomats of the twenty-one American republics left Rio for their own capitals last week, after a fortnight of committee meetings interspersed with much oratory and many state dinners, they could well be proud of their achievement.

Their last official act was the unanimous approval of some forty-one resolutions. The more important of these recommended a joint breaking of diplomatic relations with the Axis powers; cutting of all financial and economic relations with them; mobilization of strategic materials and means of production for joint defense of the Hemisphere; control of aviation and airfields; control of communications, with a censorship commission to keep news of military value from the Axis, and mobilization of all means of international transport.

The American countries will also match measures of price control to stabilize their internal economies, while the United States is to grant Latin Americans the same treatment as domestic consumers in allocations under priorities. Most tariff and trade quota barriers are to be done away with. There will be an emergency conference of foreign ministers "if any American nation violates one of the bilateral agreements and this violation can endanger American collective security."

As important an achievement as any of the formal resolutions is the agreement between Peru and Ecuador, settling their boundary dispute. Peru will evacuate Ecuadorean territory, and an international commission is to establish a permanent boundary between them. Jealousy over their petty war had laid both countries open to Axis intrigues since both had bid strongly for foreign support. Their agreement heals one of the most serious breaches in the Hemisphere front. Several other countries signed agreements with their neighbors during the conference, and a number of foreign ministers are stopping off on their way home to conclude trade treaties.

UNFORTUNATELY, the attention of our press was focused on a single question—Argentina's fight against the resolution calling for an end to diplomatic relations with the Axis. This resolution was indeed important, both as a public statement by each country that it had "chosen sides," and as a way of cutting the most direct strings from Berlin.

But it was only a small part of the business transacted. In fact, the most dangerous tactic of the opponents of unity was to try to concentrate the conference on long verbal wrangles over this resolution. Before the meeting opened, Ramon Castillo of Argentina had tried to line up Chile, Peru, and Paraguay in a joint refusal to renounce neutrality. When he failed, the Argentine delegation was increasingly isolated, limited to obstructionist tactics. At the closing session, all the other delegates cheered the news that Brazil had broken diplomatic relations. The Argentines remained stubbornly silent.

It is quite important to remember that the Argentine people are among the most enthusiastically pro-Allied of Latin America. A small, reactionary clique controls the country and is on the way toward foisting a complete dictatorship. An election in March will renew half the Chamber of Deputies, but Castillo is expected to manage this election as cynically as he did the recent provincial elections, to eliminate the last stronghold of constitutional opposition, the Radical majority in the Chamber. Then Castillo can safely let his hand-picked Congress vote on whether to expel the Nazi diplomats.

Meanwhile, it is reported that Axis diplomats and agents who have long made Brazil their headquarters in Latin America are trickling into Buenos Aires. One of the possibilities that can't be overlooked is an upheaval in Argentina, which Hitler would take advantage of, to the great danger of Hemisphere security and military embarrassment of the United States.

On the other hand, Castillo may be forced to change his policy by a combination of economic pressure and the movement of the Argentine people. Already, Uruguay has decided to restrict the transfers of funds to and from governments maintaining relations with the Axis. If other governments take this same step, Argentine trade may be crippled. Argentina is too dependent on the American market for her exports to be able to reject economic collaboration with the rest of the Hemisphere, no matter how Castillo may hanker for a market in Nazi-ruled Europe.

The only other American republic which has not broken diplomatic relations is Chile. The results of her bitterly fought presidential election are now known. Juan Antonio Rios, middle-of-the-road Radical candidate, supported both by the Popular Front parties and by the non-fascist center and rightist groups, has gained a large majority over Carlos Ibanez, the Nazi-financed ex-dictator. Unless Ibanez attempts a *coup d'etat,* Chile will in all probability now join her neighbors.

The great achievement at Rio, therefore, lies in the fact that, for the first time, all the American republics (with one partial exception) see themselves vitally interested in the strength and political unity of all the others. Above all, as the strongest and richest partner, the United States is taking the lead in strengthening the productive power of the others.

Take one example. A $25,000,000 US loan to Bolivia was announced on the last day of the conference. Bolivia has been a kind of Hemisphere "depressed area," dependent on the market for her one important export, tin. Bolivia has been hampered by lack of communications, and dominated by a combination of feudal-minded landlords and absentee mine owners. The United States urgently needs more Bolivian tin. To increase production, Bolivia needs adequate food and housing for the Indian miners. She needs machinery, roads, technicians to direct improvements both in mining and agriculture. And as far as one can estimate, the present loan will actually be used for these purposes.

Ten million dollars will go to build a road connecting the isolated interior of the country with the Andean plateau. This will open up agricultural regions and reduce Bolivia's need for food imports. At the same time, Standard Oil of New Jersey, whose Bolivian concession was expropriated in 1937, has agreed to abandon its exorbitant compensation claims. One payment of $1,250,000 will be made, while the United States is expected to lend Bolivia an additional $5,000,000 to finance the development of her oil resources. Projects similar to these are being discussed with the other Latin American countries. Unlike the loans which American financiers poured into Latin America during the 1920's, the loans of today are increasingly designed to increase Latin American productive capacity. The measures which enable Latin America to resist Axis aggression are increasingly the same measures which will end the semi-colonial position of our good neighbors in world economy.

THE DECLARATIONS at Rio will be realized in life to the extent that there are more examples of such relations with Bolivia. And even more important—to the extent that the peoples of Latin America are mobilized for democracy. Some two months ago the CTAL, which is the Latin American Trade Union Federation, under the leadership of the Mexican Lombardo Toledano, foreshadowed very many of the Rio resolutions. The CTAL called for the formation of large people's armies, thorough education in the spirit of anti-fascism, speedy action against the high cost of living, as well as a governmental offensive against the Nazi agents. Some governments as in Cuba, Chile, and Mexico are really in cooperation with the CTAL. In others, as in Brazil, the political situation at home is slowly changing. In Argentina decisive changes are yet to take place. But only as these changes develop, with understanding assistance from the United States, will the Rio resolutions really be fulfilled.

FRANK T. BAKER.

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The Red Army's Reply

HITLER made another speech last week, and the Red Army scored several more victories. It was January 30, nine years since Hitler's coming to power. It was the beginning of the third month of the Soviet counter-offensive, the offensive in which the Russians are trying to break up every position from which the Germans might launch their big spring drive. There must be millions of people in Europe watching for a few more such speeches by Hitler and a few more such advances by the Red Army.

The surprise of the military developments came in the all-important Ukraine, an even greater surprise than last week's Soviet wedge in the Valdai sector, below Leningrad and above Smolensk. A key railroad town of Lozovaya has been captured, opening the way to the town of Dniepropetrovsk, which is just at the point where the Dnieper river bends westward. This enables the Russians to strike at the rear of German positions along the sea of Azov, at Taganrog and Mariupol.

At the same time it projects the possibility of bottling the German armies in the Crimea, and opens up a path for liberating the big Ukrainian cities of Kharkov, Kursk, and Stalino, ultimately regaining for the Soviets the mouth of the Dnieper. Together with the existing Soviet pressure in the Crimea, it ought to work havoc with the Nazi lines in that strategic peninsula.

As against these perspectives Hitler could only repeat the idea that the Russians were gaining a few kilometers of frozen soil and the Nazis had everything else under control. But the whole cast of his speech was stammering and defensive, even more so than the speech of December 11, in which he announced von Brauchitch's dismissal. The usual diatribe about Churchill was there, plus imprecations against Roosevelt as an "idiot" and a "fool." The hoary claptrap about Versailles was there, and the breast-beating about the God-given mission of a certain Adolph Hitler to save Germany. The venom against the Jews was more sinister than ever, with the inference that Hitler would wipe out the entire Jewish population of Europe before he went down.

But within all the frenzy, the rat-man of Berlin, as Robert Minor calls him, projected some subtle propaganda ideas for his appeaser friends in this country and England. He inveighed against the Archbishop of Canterbury's prayer for the Russian armies; slyly suggesting that Germany would resist Bolshevism, he raised the old Red-scare that perhaps Britain would fall prey to it. So also he implied that Britain would keep her empire only if she were orientated toward Europe, a bid for a separate peace. At the same time, it is a bit of propaganda along the lines that Britain is losing her empire by orientating herself to the United States.

On the whole, it was a far cry from the boastful self-assurance that has usually accompanied the January 30 celebrations in the Third Reich. A year ago Hitler promised that the war would be over in 1941. He could not keep that promise. This year Hitler says he can't promise the war will be over in '42. But as the Soviet armies keep up their offensive, and if Britain and our own country open up that second front on the continent, Hitler can be proved as wrong this year as he was the last. And it can also be Hitler's last speech.

De Valera's Strange Neutrality

IF IRELAND were a vacuum effectively sealed from contact with the rest of the world, there would be some logic in the attitude adopted by the government of Eire toward the landing of American troops in Northern Ireland. But unfortunately, however much the Irish people may desire to remain untouched by the war—and what people did not desire it?—Adolph Hitler has decided differently for all peoples. With Nazi planes circling over Northern Ireland, the De Valera government at Dublin charges that it is the American troops that have violated Eire's neutrality—those very troops that, together with British forces, are Eire's chief guarantee against a Nazi invasion. The De Valera policy may look noble in the abstract, but its concrete effect is to help Hitler. That is a disservice to the Irish people.

The partition of Ireland, which has made Northern Ireland into a British colony, is indefensible. But even more indefensible at this time is De Valera's new partition of Ireland, which divides the Irish people from the anti-Hitler war whose success alone can save Eire's independence and make possible future reunion with the northern area. Ireland has suffered greatly from British rule, as have India and other colonies. And the British today are themselves suffering in the Far East because their colonial policy has deprived them of the full energies and industrial potential of the Asiatic peoples under their flag. But with Hitler and his accomplices determined to convert the entire globe into their private slave pen, no people can find salvation by itself. Whatever the intentions, there is little substance in De Valera's "neutrality" as there is in the "democracy" of Finland. The people of Eire, Irish-Americans, and all friends of Ireland have reason to be concerned about the dangerous implications of Dublin's course.

Good News from Chile

OUR good neighbor Chile has just come through a difficult presidential election, with the victory of the democratic candidate, Juan Antonio Rios, by a plurality of some 50,000 in a total vote of about 450,000. It comes at a moment when Chile's domestic affairs are improving; the prospect of expanding her economy, in view of the Hemisphere's needs for nitrates and copper, is a good one. It should also bring Chile back into the leadership of the democratic forces in the Americas, and exert a wholesome influence on Argentina.

Dr. Rios was the choice of all the parties formerly aligned in the Popular Front, as well as many sections of the Centre and even the non-fascist conservatives. The losing candidate is the ex-dictator, Ibanez. He had made a big play for United States support, but the wise Chilean people recognized him as the agent of the open and concealed pro-fascists. He had the support of the discredited Liberal and Conservative Parties as well as the avowed Nazi and Italian groups, but this was not enough.

Unless Ibanez and his desperate followers now try some sort of putsch, which would throw the whole southern part of the Hemisphere into an upheaval, the democratic victory should bring the period of unsettlement in Chilean life to a close. If Dr. Rios carries out the mandate of his electorate, the popular forces in Chile can now move ahead to new gains and achievements.

Labor on the Way

OFFSPRING of the national AFL-CIO Labor Victory Board have already appeared in local and state form. They may not bear the parent name and some antedate the formal establishment of the national board, but they have the common genesis of a desire for closer labor unity and for cooperation with the government and industry in maximum war production. From California, New Jersey, Illinois, among other states, come reports of a get-together movement

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which has gone well beyond preliminaries. And another phase of unity, inestimably important, is reflected in the fact that for the first time the AFL International Association of Machinists has let down its racial bars by admitting three Negroes into the local at Lockheed-Vega Aircraft. In addition, the men in the shops plan for production with a will and ingenuity that should inspire emulation. In Pittsburgh the locals of the CIO United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers have had one of their "victory plans" adopted and have formulated four others. Workers at the Otis Steel Plant in Cleveland instigated a "Scrap Week" for the collection of junked metal to make the pig iron which goes into steel. More than 100 tons were collected the first day.

Of these two instances—and they are two of many—the latter has extra meaning in that it contrasts with an outstanding example of slowdown through profiteering. We refer to the evidence presented by Philip Murray to Donald Nelson on the truth behind the scrap shortage. A six-month investigation by the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, of which Murray is chairman, revealed that some of the biggest steel industrialists collaborated with brokers to raise prices by promoting a "shortage scare." This ugly scheme may cost the nation some 8,500,000 tons of steel in 1942. Further, as Murray points out, the serious situation that now exists in steel could have been averted entirely if the SWOC plan for organizing production had been adopted. A labor-industry council was part of that plan. Such councils are needed in other industries besides steel. Labor must be fully, actively represented in industrial planning, in government councils, and in the Cabinet—wherever production policies are formulated. That is the way to total realization of America's potential war output.

Rubber Patents

THOUSANDS cheered a couple of weeks ago when Jesse Jones of the Federal Loan Agency announced a $400,000,000 appropriation to produce synthetic rubber. Within a short time, we were told, there would be enough rubber to satisfy the demands of our tank, aircraft, and naval weapons. And after that might come relief for the millions who get around on rubber tires. This country has the natural gases and petroleum oils from which synthetic rubber is made. And it has the chemical genius, too.

But across our editorial desk this week comes a provocative memorandum on the subject. It's from the Union for Democratic Action and it asks Senator Truman's investigating committee to look into the charges

What have you done this week to obtain Earl Browder's release?

that the Nazi concern, the I. G. Farben dye trust, may actually be preventing us from getting the best possible patents for rubber manufacture. According to this memo, the trouble lies in the tie-up between Standard Oil of New Jersey and the I. G. Farben.

Back in 1929 these two companies formed another organization called Jasco, the purpose of which was to enable German and American engineers to share their experience in chemical research. When the Nazis came to power, IG Farben refused to let Jasco have its most secret patents, and according to the memo, a few insiders in the Standard Oil of New Jersey declined to press the Nazis to share their information on rubber manufacture. The result was that the Nazis got started seven years ago in their synthetic rubber development, and the United States was left far behind.

Just a few months before the war broke out, IG Farben transferred hundreds of its patents to Jasco, presumably to escape the action of an Alien Property Custodian in case of war. This transaction was carried out, says the memo, to hide the patents behind the Stars and Stripes, and enable the patents to go back to Germany when the war was over. Again, a few Standard Oil officials—not the majority of its patriotic stockholders or directors—have acquiesced in this procedure. Net result is that these patents are hidden away in an American company at a time when America needs all its talent for rubber research.

We don't know whether the memo is justified in every detail. It's quite possible that other companies do have enough knowledge about rubber to outrace the Nazis. But certainly, the tie-up between Standard Oil of New Jersey and I. G. Farben is worth investigating. It's a matter of record that such tie-ups have already put us way behind in the matter of beryllium and magnesium production, as the anti-trust division of the Department of Justice revealed last year. We can't afford to let the same thing happen in rubber.

Know Your Neighbor

CIVILIAN defense, whatever its shortcomings, is already making an impressive record of democracy in action. New York, the city where nobody knows who lives in the apartment next door, is thawing the frost out of its eyes with apartment house and neighborhood meetings that are bringing together all sorts of average people for the common job. Out on the West Coast a Know-Your-Neighbor movement is growing rapidly. But we like best the experiment being tried in Chicago: the election of block air raid captains—15,000 of them. A meeting of all the residents of a block is called, at which the captain is democratically elected. He then recommends other residents for air raid and fire wardens, first-aid leaders, messengers, etc. These recommendations must be approved by the community commander, who is an appointed civilian defense district leader.

According to the New York *Herald Tribune,* Mayor Edward J. Kelly attended a meeting of about 250 residents of the block in which he lives. There was quite a contest for the job of block captain. The mayor nominated the manager of his apartment house, but the majority turned him down. The mayor proved to be a good loser.

It is in miniature "town hall" meetings such as these that democracy is sinking new roots. And it is through all kinds of civilian defense activities that the creative energies of the people can be enlisted for winning the war.

Oklahoma Ordeal

LOCKED up in an Oklahoma jail as evidence are some 10,000 books, informative books, many of them used as required reading in colleges and universities. To Oklahoma's KKK they are evidence of criminal syndicalism and their owners deserve ten years in the state penitentiary and a $5,000 fine. Two men and women have already been tried on the charge of owning and selling these books; two others on the charge of membership in the Communist Party, with the books as evidence. All were convicted and given the ten-year, $5,000 fine, and eight other defendants await trial. Meanwhile the original manuscripts of those books, or dupli-

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cate copies, are being sent by writers to the International Labor Defense, for a sale to raise funds for the defense.

The senders are among an army of American citizens who have expressed their abhorrence of the Oklahoma proceedings. A few weeks ago 279 social scientists from seventy-four universities appealed to Gov. Leon C. Phillips of Oklahoma to "put an end to the persecution of Americans for their beliefs and reading habits." An open letter and petition to the governor was signed by 145 of the nation's leading social workers, including such names as Mary Anderson, chief of the US Women's Bureau. Leading newspapers, among them the Tulsa, Okla., *Tribune,* have indicted the trials as an outrageous flouting of civil liberties.

It is possible that the Niagara of protests is at least partly responsible for the fact that no more trials have been held since last June. Meanwhile the cases of the four convicted are pending before the Oklahoma Criminal Court of Appeals, to which numerous briefs are being submitted for the defense by national organizations acting as "friends of the court." You too may "file a brief"—with Governor Phillips, urging him to use his office to halt the persecutions.

Salute

JOHN T. WHITAKER, foreign correspondent of the New York *Post* and Chicago *Daily News,* is one of our most competent journalists. The editors of this magazine have always followed his work with respect, if not always with agreement. His dispatches from republican Spain indicated where his sympathies lay: his expulsion from Rome was one result of those sympathies. This week's news tells of Mr. Whitaker's confinement to a hospital to recover from a serious operation he underwent to fit himself for the army. He hopes, upon recovery, to be assigned to combat duty in Europe or Africa. As members of Mr. Whitaker's craft, we pay tribute to his pertinacity and patriotism; it indicates how American writers and journalists feel about their duties in this war.

Likewise, we wish godspeed and success to one of NEW MASSES' favorite contributors, the historian Herbert Aptheker, who goes into the army February 12. Somehow it seems proper that he becomes a soldier on the birthday of Abraham Lincoln: his researches into Negro history have become known throughout the country.

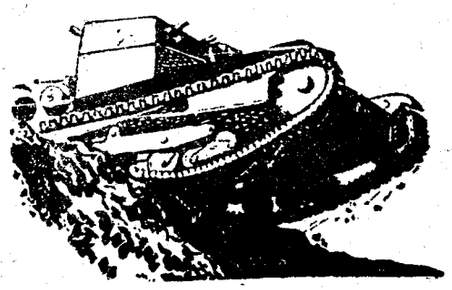
Thus, he follows in the path of other NEW MASSES writers who fought for democracy in Spain. We who continue our services behind the lines must be worthy of our colleagues who take the gun. Writers, in all just wars, have written chapters in the book of freedom —with gun or pen—that inspire us all.

Sojourner Truth vs. Jim Crow

QUITE possibly Representative Tenerowicz of Michigan and his friends do not know who Sojourner Truth was, and would not care if they did know. The chief concern of the gentleman from Michigan and certain other congressmen is to serve real estate interests by banning Negro defense workers from a Detroit housing project built especially for them and named after the famous Negro woman Abolitionist and Civil War heroine. To this end the congressmen have put pressure on Washington officials, by threatening to withhold action on a $300,000,000 housing bill. At this writing they have succeeded in their purpose—first by obtaining a decision from federal housing authorities to accept only white applicants for the project, and second by securing the dismissal of Clark Foreman, head of the defense housing division of the Federal Works Agency, who opposed the realtors' maneuver. However, a counter-offensive has been launched by Detroiters that may force reversal of the decision. A committee of thirty-eight citizens, Negro and white, picket the houses constantly. A Negro delegation to Washington has protested personally to Charles H. Palmer, Defense Housing Coordinator. Detroit's Common Council has pointed out to Washington authorities that the 200 homes were designed for the Negroes and their applications had been accepted for months before the order came to take only whites. There isn't a breath of doubt as to which side in this fight has the logic, justice, and decency; Congressman Tenerowicz' group hasn't even an argument. To defeat their maneuver is to triumph over a combination of racial prejudice and profit-seeking that subverts the principles for which this war is being fought.

Music for Morale

MUSIC hath charms to stimulate as well as soothe, and its uses in wartime are many. Proceeding from this fact, the National Music Council has offered a wartime program which should keep its thirty-seven member groups—representing about 650,000 individuals—busy for the duration. It's a highly ambitious program, divided into military, civilian, and general categories, and to present it adequately here is impossible. We note, however, that there is a healthy stress on the collective, for example the organization of glee clubs, choruses, bands, and mass singing in war-industry plants. The council plans to inform itself on the sort of musical activities most in demand by the boys in camps. It also aims to promote the use of music in army and naval hospitals for therapeutic purposes and for entertainment. Another objective is to establish a series of free concerts for the general public and to further community sings. And if music is a tonic to war morale, it is equally true that war in a just cause inspires good music—a fact recognized by the council, which plans to encourage composers in their efforts. Among the members of the National Music Council groups are performers, teachers, radio broadcasters, music publishers, composers, members of music clubs, every sort of worker in the musical field. Add to this personnel the thousands of musical-minded citizens who will be eager to do their share, and the job which the council has set for itself is not too large for accomplishment.



Happy Birthday

THE eighteenth birthday of a newspaper is ordinarily not an occasion of any particular significance. But when these eighteen years have witnessed a daily miracle of truth-telling and courageous leadership unequalled in American journalism, it's definitely a time for sitting up and taking notice. We refer, of course, to the *Daily Worker,* which is celebrating its eighteenth anniversary at a meeting at New York's Manhattan Center Sunday afternoon, February 8.

The *Daily Worker* has never been awarded the Pulitzer prize for crusading journalism. But pick up any issue and you'll find a crusade for progress, for democracy, for a better America and a better world that outshines the achievements of the prize winners. It is the only daily English-language labor paper in the country. It is the only paper that consistently champions Negro rights and the rights of all persecuted minorities. It is the paper that made the Scottsboro case into an international issue; that fought to free Tom Mooney and Warren K. Billings; that pioneered in the battle for social security; that gave unstinting support to democratic Spain and China; that opposed the Munich betrayal and worked tirelessly for friendship between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is the paper that today is up in front fighting for victory over the nation's enemies.

In connection with its eighteenth birthday the *Daily Worker* has launched a campaign to double the circulation of the *Sunday Worker.* More power to it.

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THE GOOD EARTH'S WARRIORS

Pearl Buck's powerful novel of China's resistance. Her grim depiction of the barbarity which the Japanese invader has brought to 400,000,000. Reviewed by Samuel Sillen.

DRAGON SEED, *by Pearl S. Buck. John Day Co. $2.50.*

THE appearance of this novel so soon after December 7 is a good omen for war literature in this country. Written before the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, *Dragon Seed* nevertheless shows how an American writer, responding to the challenge of the time, may achieve a deeper emotional involvement and a subtler craft. If *Dragon Seed* is the firmest and most convincing of Pearl Buck's novels, it is in large measure because the author has imaginatively participated in a crucial phase of the anti-fascist struggle. The war for freedom generates a new intensity of feeling. It heightens political understanding. It forces us to confront and remold the basic values by which we live. And just as passionate feeling, political clarity, grappling with ultimate human values become necessities for social survival, they become ingredients of artistic growth.

Pearl Buck's story of Chinese resistance expresses with sharpness and beauty what Americans, no less than our Allies, feel today. It expresses our hate for the invaders whose cruel rapacity and bloodstained sadism at Nanking is mirrored at Manila and Yasnaya Polyana. It expresses our active and hopeful identification with Ling Tan and the hundreds of millions who battle for liberty on distant continents. For us too does the Chinese student speak when he tells his countrymen: "We must fight the enemy. We must resist until we are dead and then our sons must resist after us. Listen, brave men! The enemy is succeeding at first but they shall not succeed at last. They have taken our land one hundred miles deep, but we must not let them take the second hundred miles. If they take it in spite of us then we must hold the next hundred miles. Fight! Fight!" For us this Chinese student speaks, and he might be a Soviet or a British student, or a student in any one of dozens of countries. And when the farmer Ling Tan tells his wife that they must harry the invader "like fleas in a dog's tail so that the beast can make no headway for stopping to gnaw his rear," we recognize the folk accents of the Ukrainian guerrilla warrior and the Serbian Chetnik.

THIS THEME of implacable resistance to brutal aggression gives the novel its strong symbolic character. We follow the frightening and at the same time inspiring life of Ling Tan and his family as if we were reading a parable of the contemporary world. This peasant family, "neither rich nor poor," lives in a village a few miles from Nanking; but its experience has counterparts beyond the seas. One can't help realizing that in this story of China, Pearl Buck is holding up the mirror to America.

Pearl S. Buck

And particularly with regard to the illusion, so rudely shattered, that anything can be done either to remain outside the war orbit or to appease the warmakers. The first section of *Dragon Seed* portrays the placid life of the village. Ling Tan follows the old ways. Illiterate himself he does not believe in schooling for his children. His sons cultivate the rice fields. One daughter has married a Nanking merchant, Wu Lien. The mother, Ling Sao, broods over the flock, giving advice compounded of folk wisdom and folk superstition. The rumors of war which come to this family seem unreal. That "the little dwarfs from the East Ocean" should ever interrupt their tranquil and harmless existence seems incredible. When students smash Wu Lien's shop because he handles Japanese goods, their action appears irresponsible, just as the rebellious unconventionality of Jade (wife of Ling Tan's second son Lao Er) appears wanton.

This section creates an idyllic atmosphere in the familiar vein of Pearl Buck's earlier work. But the idyll is not this time an end in itself; it is the prelude which deepens the significance of what is to come. When the flying ships come over Nanking to drop their bombs, the simple farmers of the region are still more confused than indignant. The meaning of the invasion is felt slowly, but insistently and with accumulating pressure. In the author's description of the cruelty and suffering that follows, there is a hard, unflinching realism that makes the reader grit his teeth. If anyone ever felt that Pearl Buck was a sentimental novelist, the depiction of rape and murder in these pages will change his mind. For in a tone whose evenness expresses a grim, toughminded facing of facts, the novelist shocks us into an awareness of the unadulterated evil that the Japanese brought to China. A Harvard professor, Howard Mumford Jones, has objected in the *Saturday Review of Literature* to Pearl Buck's description of the invaders in terms of "what we wish to believe of our enemies." But it is not a question of a "wish to believe" but of solid fact that the fascist states have encouraged the sexual barbarity, looting, indiscriminate killing that Pearl Buck describes here. Her description is no more "exaggerated" (as the New York *Times* put it) than the recent account by Molotov of Nazi rapine in the Soviet Union.

There are two ways of meeting the invader's terror. One is the way of Ling Tan and his sons. The other is the way of the merchant son-in-law, Wu Lien. Ling Tan resorts to every stratagem in order to deprive the Japanese of the food which they requisition. He becomes the leader of a village resistance band. Together with his sons who hide in the hills by day and wage guerrilla warfare by night, he learns to trap the enemy and cut him down. If as time goes by he is troubled by the ease with which he can kill, he is never in doubt of his task, to make the enemy stop in order to gnaw his rear. And he looks with contempt upon Wu Lien, who has sold out to the enemy and become the puppet official of a puppet state.

PEARL BUCK has often been praised for her "restraint," but sometimes in her earlier work one was more aware of the polished surface than of a powerful undercurrent of feeling artistically controlled. In her last novel, for example, I felt that clarity of form was obtained at the expense of penetrating insight into character and issues. The surface of *The Patriot* was attractive, but thin—too thin to withstand the pressures of the reality that was being depicted. The novelist placed as the supreme virtues of life "enlightenment and knowledge, order and grace," which hovered abstractly over the story as standards of judgment regardless of the concrete realities of a situation. Her treatment of Chinese Communists left the impression that they were perpetual malcontents by temperament, unmindful of "order and grace," relishing fighting for the sake of fighting. In *The Patriot* the novelist misrepresented these heroic fighters for China's freedom. Her treatment of the

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"WHAT DO YOU KNOW?"

see the back cover

Japanese scenes in the book conveyed only the faintest impression of what fascist tyranny was like.

At least there was enough ambiguity to cause one Chinese reviewer of the book in far-away Chungking to declare: "If only Pearl Buck could travel again through her long unvisited China, she would see much which has only come into existence recently. And if she were to use her art to interpret these developments as they really are, we are certain she would achieve even greater success than before." *Dragon Seed* responds to this challenge for a more faithful interpretation. The author suggests the stride forward in the consciousness of the people, particularly of the younger generation. She shows that an ignominious lackey like Wu Lien represents only the dying fraction of the merchant class. She portrays the obscene hypocrisy of puppet regimes which are, if possible, even more hateful to the people than the dictatorship of which they are branch offices. She describes the Japanese use of opium in order to break the will of a population when murder and starvation do not work. She portrays the humanity, resourcefulness, and bravery of people fighting to retain their ancestral plot of earth.

In her Nobel Prize lecture on "The Chinese Novel," Pearl Buck described the stylistic method of the Chinese story-teller: "He kept his audiences always in mind and he found that the style which they loved best was one which flowed easily along, clearly and simply, in the short words which they themselves used every day, with no other technique than occasional bits of description, only enough to give vividness to a place or a person, and never enough to delay the story." Much of this can be applied to her own style. It is, above all, lucid and simple. However closely it may correspond to the Chinese, it does succeed in communicating a sense of great dignity and assurance. It is, to be sure, a dangerous style because it tends to even off the sharp edges of reality: it tends toward monotony and artificiality. But for a story that is inherently dynamic, the style of biblical simplicity creates, as in this novel, an effective sense of reserve power, a sense of meanings that are wider than the immediate subject matter. Unlike the verbal pyrotechnics of the experimentalists, this style seems to get one close to the more habitual patterns of folk expression.

Yet the book is unquestionably limited with respect to both the psychological depth of portraiture and richness of social theme. The character who interested me most was not Ling Tan but Jade, the daughter-in-law. But we get only suggestions of those qualities which make her a representative type of the new Chinese woman who, breaking the bonds of centuries, takes her full place in modern life. The characters are in motion, but they are not fulfilled. And this is no doubt in part due to the structure of the book. There are long time intervals, particularly after the first section, and during these intervals there is no dramatic progression of character. Similarly, the social framework of the novel provides no points of organic contact between the development of political consciousness in the village and the general development of Chinese life. The book refers to no parties, no leaders, no bodies of ideas and organizational influences; and this isolation, credible at first, seems less and less real as the war goes on. There is in this respect a vacuum, a sure clue that the novel is not, as of course it could not be, written out of immediate experience.

But the fundamental drive and the fundamental perception are there. As I read the book I kept thinking of a talk I had with Pearl Buck some weeks ago. I had above all been impressed by the sincerity and determination of her feeling about "superior and inferior" races. She had written a letter to the New York *Times* taking issue with that paper's editorial treatment of the so-called "crime wave" in Harlem. "Our government," she had written, "can and should see to it that all Americans shall have equal economic opportunity and that colored people in this democracy shall not suffer insult because of their color." In answering the challenge of Hitler, she said, we must also answer the challenge of racism in America. Bigotry, hypocrisy, the concept of master and subject races, are threats to national unity and the unity of the diverse peoples who are fighting fascism.

The strength of her feeling on this score, the strong sense of fair play and human decency, the deep affection for the Chinese people which the novelist expressed in this interview has been translated into imaginative terms in this book. Anyone who sympathetically reads *Dragon Seed* would be ashamed to evaluate human beings in terms of color or of race. In one symbolic episode there appears a white teacher who makes her Chinese girl students automatically memorize "Paul Revere's Ride." She is utterly unconscious that in the anti-Japanese war raging around her the Chinese people are creating their own Paul Reveres. There is a superb irony here which underlines Pearl Buck's implicit moral that with virtually bare hands the people of China have for years been fighting not only their battle but ours, against a savage aggressor. *Dragon Seed* will strengthen our determination to fight with such an ally unto the death of fascism.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Limited Poll

AMERICAN OPINION ON THE SOVIET UNION, *by Meno Lovenstein. Introduction by Broadus Mitchell. American Council on Public Affairs.*

THIS book was prepared sometime before June 22. It is probable that the author was then not aware of the degree to which the very opinion he was analyzing was being regimented with such effect that he himself was confined within limitations whose narrowness is only now becoming apparent.

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Certainly at the time the book was being done it was enterprising merely to undertake such a project.

Thus the book reflects the repression that reaction in America was exercising, inhibiting and constricting workers even in the field of scholarly research. I feel that Dr. Lovenstein will agree with me that his book would have been clearer and firmer, that it would have struck deeper in its analysis had it not been carried out in the atmosphere of political firings from WPA rolls and teaching staffs, inquisitions conducted by legislative investigating committees, discriminatory application of technicalities in the courts, job blacklists and editorial blacklists, with social pressures superadded.

The chief reflection of these disagreeable realities of a reactionary period shows itself in Dr. Lovenstein's study in his hesitation in dealing with what is perhaps the most characteristic phenomenon of American opinion on the Soviet Union—the monster image created and circulated by the American "organs of opinions." This image was projected with all the journalistic and editorial skills so highly developed in our advanced country and kept going with a continuity and implacability not shown toward any other country, not even toward Japan and Germany, most dangerous of our international enemies.

To have discussed this monster image and the reasons for summoning it so continuously from the propaganda bottle would have called for a consideration of class motivations, a discussion which would have risked placing the book in the dangerous area euphemistically designated as "controversial." It would have led to the embarrassing recognition that until faced by an overwhelming crisis as in 1932 and the greater one of today, the ruling class is tireless in carrying on its class war strategy. One of its most persistent operations has been its anti-Soviet propaganda, though that has meant perilous inattention to and even strengthening of the nation's avowed enemies.

DR. LOVENSTEIN avoids the issue but cannot keep it from hanging in looming implications over the book. He deals very gingerly with the mass media where the monster image has its hugest projections, not touching upon radio and movies at all; he pays minor attention to the newspapers; and in the sections on "general magazines" makes no distinction in weight between a magazine with a circulation of millions and one with a circulation of twenty-odd thousand. This leaves him standing on comparatively safe ground. It permits him to lay the responsibility on the intellectuals.

As a result the book is carried out on the basis of an assumption not directly stated but implied throughout. The implication is that, for reasons Dr. Lovenstein finds himself constrained not to go into, American opinion was biased and misinformed; that this situation should have been corrected by those groups in American life whose interests and professional responsibilities called for their acquiring accurate information and forming unbiased opinion. These groups were editors, economists, historians, sociologists, technicians, business analysts, government officials, and scholars in general. Their failure is what Dr. Lovenstein dwells on, stressing in his conclusion the "deficient services rendered by scholars and intellectuals." That is virtually all that he arrives at as explanation for the misinformation and bias in American opinion on the Soviet Union.

"Add up the failings one by one; the deficient services rendered by scholars and intellectuals, the inadequacies of published information, the immense proportions of the subject, and the lack of intellectual and emotional preparation of the people in the United States. These factors lead to this fatal conclusion: America is not getting the benefits of another nation's experience. The American people are not being given the necessary information with which to make the decisions that are expected of them and that they have to make. They are left continuously unprepared and uninformed."

But this is diagnosis by restating the symptoms. Is it mere accident or is it in the nature of scholars and intellectuals to render deficient services? Why in a world equipped with radio, speed press, teletype, wirephoto, etc., with newspapers in the big American cities running to forty-eight pages and over, and American magazines fabulously big and fabulously cheap, and available everywhere in the country, should published information have been, in Dr. Lovenstein's polite word, "inadequate"? Who and what were responsible for the "lack of emotional and intellectual preparation" in the country best supplied among the nations of the world with institutions of learning, printing presses, radios in every home, and so on and so forth?

The explanation is not the innocuous one that scholars and intellectuals failed in their duty for, alas, it was their duty, as dictated by class interests whose reach extended even to learned journals, to withhold information and to misinform. It is not the failure of scholarship but the deliberate misuse of scholarship, that lies behind the corruption and stultifying of American opinion on the Soviet Union.

If these limitations of the book are understood, then its values, however constricted, can be emphasized. For Dr. Lovenstein's book nevertheless, despite its limitations, does a very useful job. So far as I know, it is the first systematic study of this subject. The material it digests is very large—books, the labor press (except left wing magazines which are not dealt with under any category), business magazines, economic journals, newspapers, learned periodicals, and government reports. In the digest of this material much useful data is assembled.

Furthermore, the book gives some attention to one fact which has rarely, so far as I know, been dealt with; that is, the direct effect of

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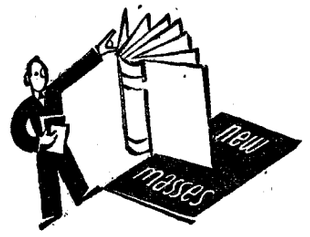

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developments at home on American opinion on the Soviet Union. This effect was always more immediate and influential than the reactions to events in the Soviet Union. Bearing that in mind we begin to see why America's economic needs during the depression brought about a comparatively "good press" for the Soviet Union; and why the subsequent "bad press" in the later thirties had a direct relationship to the growing power of reaction in America and its interest in expanding a Red Terror image, and not to the Moscow trials.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Quack, Quack

HOLLYWOOD: THE MOVIE COLONY—THE MOVIE MAKERS, *by Leo C. Rosten. Harcourt, Brace. $4.*

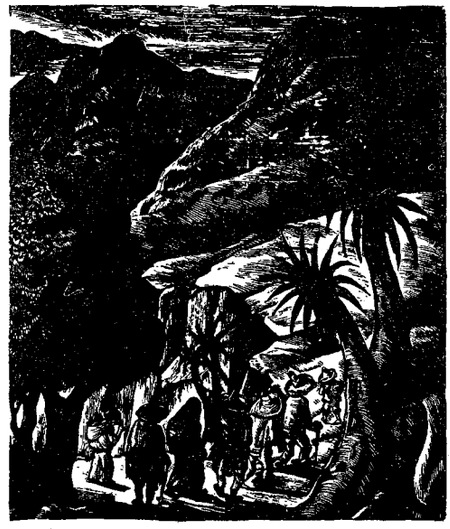
DR. ROSTEN'S study of Hollywood is extensive but not intensive, like a very little manure spread over a very big field. At first sight the book appears impressively scholarly; it was subsidized by both the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations, it boasts in its blurb of a "trained staff of eleven people" assisting the author, it bristles with questionnaires. Yet, upon closer examination, what should have been objective research disintegrates into a hash of gossip, generality, and prejudice. Such meat as the book has is in quotations from other authors. Although advertised as an economist, Dr. Rosten abjures economic analysis of Hollywood's problems in favor of a quack pseudo-Freudian psychoanalyst jargon—"Spending becomes a mechanism by which one part of the personality pays off another." The tables of statistics resolve themselves, for the most part, into singularly pointless tabulations of the marriages and ages of screen personalities. *What Makes Sammy Run,* which offered itself as a novel, was yet a far more sober and competent economic analysis than the Rosten book; and the TNEC report on the film monopoly (an indispensable piece of research which Rosten dismisses with one footnote), although an impersonal study, afforded far more insight into the psychology of the movie industry than *Hollywood.* When such cynical superficiality is added to a deliberate whitewashing of the producer caste, it is surprising that Rosten has been appointed to a key job in the organization of films for defense—surprising and tragic. His total subservience to producers is hardly good equipment for an efficient and conscientious administrator. Nor are films for democracy best supervised by a man who visibly has such limited understanding of the meaning of the word.

Similarly, the book's style is inappropriate to a serious survey. Dr. Rosten's overblown version of the English language, in which a pretty girl becomes a beauteous maiden, and the practice of paying stars enormous wages is called "the iron ring of Pactolian salaries," makes heavy and dull going, even when relieved with such sensational chapter headings as "Eros in Hollywood" or "The Night Life of the Gods." Considered separately, these pretentiously named chapters dwindle into (a) lurid accounts of Hollywood extravagances and absurdities, (b) defense of these foibles on the rather curious ground that Eastern social leaders behave even worse.

Dr. Rosten's refusal to use not only elementary economics but even elementary common sense leads him into frequent grotesque contradictions, as when he spends pages trying to prove that not money but vanity and various psychological aberrations dictate the mad scramble for Hollywood prestige—and then gives the whole show away by concluding, "Prestige is carefully guarded in Hollywood for its monetary complements (sic) are exact, obvious, and inescapable." But the worst contradictions are reserved for the chapters on producers and on "Politics over Hollywood." In the former the author amuses himself and us with loving description of the "screwiness" of producers in general, then insists that, since the film business is a screwy business anyhow, only these screwy geniuses understand it well enough to produce such masterpieces as, say, *Gone With the Wind.* In other words, the present producers must be left in control or there will be no more Scarlett O'Hara. Of the role of the producers in exploiting their subordinates, in perverting and debasing good work, something is said, but only through occasional personal anecdote, without any attempt at sincere analysis. Of the role of the producers in union-busting and terrorization, nothing is said at all. A bland footnote declares that the whole question of the unions will have to be left for a later volume.

WORSE still is the political chapter. After a hypocritical condemnation of Red-baiting, Rosten launches upon a hysterical diatribe that could give Martin Dies points. Carefully declaring that his darlings, the producers, are not Communists (who ever thought they were?) the author slanders the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League and the Motion Picture Democratic Committee with the stupid, Peglerish "Communazi" label. The present position of world events exposes this nonsense as the miserable thing it is; Dr. Rosten should bring his malice up to date. His definition of patriotism, similarly, leaves something to be desired. Wishing to heap the highest possible honor upon such a patriot as the convicted income-tax evader, Mr. Schenck, Rosten triumphantly produces as proof of sterling democracy—Schenck's devotion to the cause of Finland. This book is not a survey of Hollywood; it is an appeasement of Hollywood—the Hollywood of reaction, labor-baiting and Red-baiting, and cheap escapism.

JOY DAVIDMAN.



Where Do We Go from Here?

THE INTENT OF THE ARTIST, *by Sherwood Anderson, Thornton Wilder, Roger S. Sessions, William Lescaze. Edited, with an introduction, by Augusto Centeno. Princeton University Press. 1941.*

THESE essays have considerable variety of form. Mr. Wilder's, the briefest, is rather like a syllabus on basic principles of the drama, which would be useful in preparing for an examination; it is very rich in 1, 2, 3, 4 heads and subheads: "A play presupposes a crowd. The reasons for this go deeper than (1) the economic necessity for the support of the play, and (2) the fact that the temperament of the actors is proverbially dependent on group attention. It rests on the fact that (1) the pretense . . . . and (2). . . ." Anderson's is informal and chatty, a talk among friends. Lescaze's takes the form of a question and answer dialogue on architecture, with excellent graphic illustrations. The paper by Sessions is most like a very good lecture, with a piano at hand to be used in the analysis of the opening bars of the Prelude to *Tristan und Isolde.*

I found Professor Centeno's elaborately phrased introduction hard to read. But when translated into the simpler terms I am used to, it said rather familiar, and on the whole, undisputed, things about artists and art. Such as: The artist is a doer, a maker. And art is always primarily the expression of a living man. (One could, of course, question the meaning of "living.") And artists are creators and interpreters of our times and lives. (Professor Centeno puts it "of the realness" of our times and lives, and one could discuss the meaning of "realness" to the end of our time and our lives.) An artist cannot separate himself from "livingness," and yet has to be "separate." (Does that mean something like objective or detached?) Many artists have had certain handicaps conducive to "separateness": blindness (the legendary Homer), deafness (Beethoven), tuberculosis (Chopin), epilepsy (Dostoevsky)—all sources of "separateness" but not of "separation." Where no such handicaps are discoverable—as with Bach and Shakespeare, and one might add Titian, Goethe, Tolstoy, and many others—Professor Centeno says ". . . the psychological origin of this attitude of the spirit may remain uncomprehended." So the theory does not add up to much in accounting for the attitude of "separateness."

More open to question than most of the statements is this: that the artist is not a political thinker—in fact, not a thinker at all.

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But how is one to separate thinking from doing? Such false dichotomies vitiate the argument, as they have vitiated a few thousand other such arguments down the ages. Equally damaging are such mutually exclusive alternative as ". . . either art is a pure and irreducible activity, one which provides its own peculiar content, supplies its own morality and includes its own meaning; or art is only a pleasanter way of presenting facts, meanings, and truths pertaining to other realms of reality where they exist in a purer and fuller form." But maybe art is neither, but something else again, not impaled on either horn. What is a "pure and irreducible activity"? Perhaps the cherubim and seraphim who "continually do cry" (according to the *Te Deum)* do engage in such activity. But where else may it be discovered, beyond the confines of the throne of the Almighty?

In discussing, rather interestingly and with careful definition, the terms content, extent, and intent, Professor Centeno says that art, in relation to possible spectators, is the symbol of a "synallagmatic contract, one involving mutual obligations between the expressive intent and the spectator's comportment." This, I take it, is another way of saying that art is both expression and communication. And another statement: The work of art is not static and invariable, but "a dynamic spiritual unit impelled by forces of rotation and translation in a long orbit of historical life." And this, I take it, suggests that what the work of art communicates changes with the generations, as "Time marches on."

Translating Professor Centeno's introduction is a valuable exercise in semantics. The essays themselves are much simpler. Sherwood Anderson says again what he wrote elsewhere, about craftsmanship in words, about the relationship between the people the artist observes in actual life and the characters in fiction which grow out of them, and about other matters of interest to the writer of fiction. He again insists—as he always did, unnecessarily?—that he sets no high value upon himself as a thinker. And he pretends, as he always did, to be struggling for words, when, as a matter of fact, he nearly always expressed himself with great skill. His value as a thinker —at least in those moments when sentimentality gets the better of him—is beautifully illustrated by this remark about Turgenev: Though an aristocrat, he wrote stories about serfs so touching that the czar Alexander, "was fairly compelled by the feeling aroused in him to free the serfs." A truly amazing simplification of the causes of historic events. It reminds me of a movie I saw four years ago in Paris, which set forth how this same czar was on the very point of giving Russia a constitution, urged thereto by his humanitarian mistress, when he was assassinated by a Red, and all was lost.

Anderson ends with a familiar plea: to be let alone as an artist, and especially not to be forced to do political or social thinking. "If the power were to be given me to change the whole social structure by turning over my hand, I would not dare to turn it over." This kind of "if" is a fairytale, an entirely unreal contingency, and no answer at all to the demand that an artist whose concern is with the lives of people in a society should do all the political and social thinking of which he is capable.

DOROTHY BREWSTER.

Honors for a Few

O. HENRY MEMORIAL AWARD PRIZE SHORT STORIES OF 1941, *edited by Herschel Brickell. Doubleday Doran. $2.50.*

OF THE twenty stories included in this volume, only one or two are completely escapist, out of our range of experience. There is even less evidence of the brittle, sophisticated type of cynicism which has been popular in the past. On the whole the stories show a definite tendency to deal with vital social themes —a tendency which is, however, only partially realized. It is often obscured by vagueness, confusion, and surface skimming, and too few of the stories actually come to grips with the problems at which they hint. Most of them are strictly of the slick magazine variety, to be read through once, enjoyed, and put aside.

The stories that make the anthology worth owning are: "Eighteenth Summer," by Hallie Southgate Abbett, "My Pigeon Pair," by Dorothy Thomas, and "Afternoon in the Jungle," by Albert Maltz.

"Eighteenth Summer" is the story of an adolescent love affair; a rather slight piece of work, but quite moving in its obvious authenticity, and in the wholly understanding and sympathetic way it is told. "My Pigeon Pair" is a warmly told story of a boy and girl in love, struggling against the warping effect of poverty and unemployment.

"Afternoon in the Jungle" is undoubtedly the most powerful, hardhitting story in the collection. In it Maltz tells of a young boy and a man fighting over a fifty-cent piece which has dropped through a grating on the street. The boy, who has never had more than a few pennies at a time, dreams of chocolate bars and lollypops. The man fights with him out of desperate necessity, and ends up sobbing to the adamant child, "I got to have some of it! This is my *business,* kid. It's all I do." A vivid story of the naked struggle for bare subsistence, told in Maltz's typical stripped-down style.

"Defeat," Kay Boyle's story which was awarded first prize by the judges, is a story of present-day France which seems to present a totally false picture of the Nazi occupation. While obviously sympathetic to the French people, Miss Boyle tells of a party given by a group of occupying Nazis to which the women of the village flocked, lured by the uniforms of the "blond young demigods," and by the good food, music, and gaiety. The picture painted here has been belied by the facts.

CLAUDIA RICKER.

1924 1942

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Rediscovered Treasure

THE KIDNAPPED AND THE RANSOMED, *by Kate R. Pickard. Negro Publication Society of America. $2.75.*

HISTORY is an ambiguous term. It is recorded, it is made, and it *is*. Rarely does a book comprise within itself all aspects of this fascinating subject. This Herndon edition (as it properly may be called) of a neglected classic of American Negro life is most emphatically a book of that type.

In simple, quaint, and moving language, the author tells the true story of Levin and Peter Still, their kidnapping, their sale into slavery, Levin's death, Peter's slave life in the deep South for forty years, his escape and almost incredible adventures thereafter. There is no more poignant and beautiful scene in the epic pageantry of Americana than that describing the meeting between the fugitive Peter and his brother William, director of the Philadelphia branch of the Underground Railroad.

The Kidnapped and the Ransomed is, however, more than one of the basic sources for a study of American slavery, *from the slave's viewpoint*. When first published in 1856, it served as an important force in arousing the conscience of America to the crying injustice and cancerous quality of Negro enslavement. Within a few months of its publication it went through three editions, and powerfully assisted its hero, Peter Still, in his self-assumed task of touring the nation and aiding in the agitational work of Douglass, Tubmann, Phillips, Sumner, Mott, and their comrades. The issuance of this edition by the newly founded Negro Publication Society, which is dedicated to the task of resuscitating and making easily available great works dealing with the American Negro, will be noted by future interpreters as a milestone in that people's efforts for self-assertion and complete liberation. It is eminently fitting that Angelo Herndon should be the directing force behind this vital project.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Child's Saga

RUN, RUN! An Adventure in New York, *by Harry Granick. Illustrated by Gregor Duncan. Simon & Schuster. $2.*

Harry Granick has written a good juvenile novel. He wanted young readers to see New York—to feel, smell, and hear it. They will.

Two children, Tony and Ruth, visit New York for the first time. When they arrive at Grand Central Station, the Travelers Aid Society fails to meet them, for the simple reason that they have arrived a day ahead of time. They also bump into what looks to them like a kidnapper, which frightens them into running away from the security of the station. They run right into adventure and they don't stop running.

They run into a bootblack. An artist. A Chinese family in Chinatown. The captain of a fishing boat. A Negro family in Harlem. A singer. All the people who were friends when the kids needed befriending. The ten-year-old children discover places and parts of New York many well informed persons don't know exist—like the forge down in the sub-basement of the New York Public Library; the Aquarium where immigrants were once held for investigation as they are now held at Ellis Island. The youngsters were guests in fire traps and discovered what sub-standard tenement dwellings are like. They join a demonstration and picket on the line, on the line. They are part of a people's parade. They sleep wherever they find themselves at the end of a strenuous day evading the detectives frantically searching for them. They even find refuge under the Statue of Liberty and on Ellis Island.

Granick has gotten a lot of ideas, color, adventure, and plot into the book. But he has plenty left over, which he might, with more careful design, do as a second or third book. Good, progressive novels for children are scarce.

Gregor Duncan's illustrations are decorative but would have more appeal for children if they had more punch.

MARIAN ARMSTRONG.

ART CALENDAR

New York City

FORBES, Donald — Paintings. Willard Gallery, 32 East 57th St. (until Feb. 14th)

GOODELMAN, Aaron — Sculptures. A.C.A. Gallery, 26 W. 8th St. (until Feb. 14th)

KENT, Rockwell — Paintings. Wildenstein Galleries, 19 East 64th St. (until Feb. 27th)

KLEE — Oils, water-colors, drawings. Nierendorf Gallery, 17 East 57th St. (until Feb. 28th)

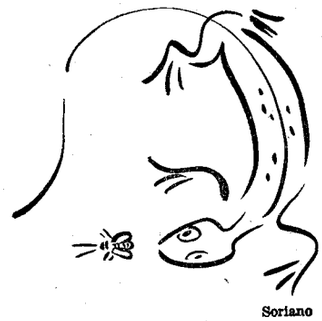
LEVI, Julian — Paintings. Downtown Gallery. (until Feb. 28th)

LIPCHITZ—Sculptures. Buchholz Gallery, 32 E. 57th St. (until Feb. 14th)

MONDRIAN — Paintings and drawings. Valentine Gallery, 55 E. 57th St. (until Feb. 7th)

REMBRANDT — Metropolitan Museum's entire collection of paintings, prints, and drawings, 5th Ave., and 82nd St. (until March 29th)

U. S. Army Illustrators from Fort Custer and 18 Americans, 1942 — Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd St. (until March 10th)



Soriano

Primer on Incendiaries

FIRE FROM THE AIR, *by J. Enrique Zanetti. Columbia University Press. 50c.*

NO KNOWLEDGE of chemistry is needed to understand this excellent 52-page booklet on the ABC of incendiaries. From a series of lectures which he delivered to groups of professional fire fighters and police specialists, the author has prepared a most useful booklet for air raid wardens, auxiliary firemen, and the general public. A brief history of incendiaries from a "Greek fire" to the modern thermite-magnesium bomb prepares the reader for a non-technical discussion of the chemical and physical properties of the materials used in incendiaries. It is unfortunate that the booklet wasn't expanded to include the experiences of London, Moscow, and Chungking in combating the effects of fire bombs. Indeed Professor Zanetti had expected no new developments in incendiaries he discusses, which range from the six and one-half-ounce BIB (baby incendiary bomb) to the incendiary (containing many 2-5-pound thermite bombs). However an AP dispatch of December 19 records the use of 32 and 130-pound thermite bombs by the Japanese.

In his concluding pages, Professor Zanetti indicates potential danger spots in an air raid. He calls for the strict patrol and supervision of combustible areas, alcohol distilleries, chemical explosive factories, warehouses and docks. And he warns that: "Particular attention [on the enemy's part] will be given the poorly constructed districts—slums, old-law tenements, and the like. If correctly mapped and adequately sprayed with incendiaries, these districts would constitute areas in which to start a dangerous conflagration. So great is the danger that, from the point of view of defense, the removal of slums ceases to be a purely humanitarian undertaking and becomes an item in a program of national defense."

JAMES KNIGHT.

Brief Review

AIRCRAFT SPOTTER, *by Lester Ott. Harcourt, Brace & Co. $1.*

This is a useful publication, in format like a magazine, which gives the details, in image and print, of several score airplanes of the Allied and Axis powers. It will be useful to air raid wardens, aircraft spotters and observers, and plain civilians who want to know how to tell an enemy plane from a friendly one. The method of classifying airplanes is detailed: by the shape, number, and placement of their wings, the number of motors, the shape of tail surfaces—in flight. Silhouettes of the most prominent types are printed, as they would appear from the ground. However, the book hasn't enough silhouettes of Soviet ships (only five conventional photographs being shown), or of Japanese planes (five conventional photographs). But the German and Italian types are well represented.

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HECHT IN THE VALLEY

A play with all the action and character of a corpse in rigor mortis. . . . Another play by John Van Druten in which confusion is a plot. Alvah Bessie in the front row.

THE critics professed not to understand what Ben Hecht was saying in his new, uncollaborated effort, *Lily of the Valley,* which opened and closed last week, like a door. But this was a horse of another color, and at the risk of receiving from Mr. Hecht another of his silly little sonnets to the critics, I'll take a chance on telling you what he was up to.

After Huysmans, the French novelist, wrote *A Rebours* (Against the Grain), a great French critic said that there were only two paths open to Huysmans: suicide or the Cross of Rome. Huysmans embraced the Church. And that is exactly what Mr. Hecht was doing—but with his caustic tongue inside his cheek. For he too has progressed from the days when he had an international reputation for pornography (remember *Fantazius Mallare?*) to the present moment, when he is attempting to exploit the uncertainties of people in a warring world. And with a sneer he offers them a strange brand of religion, knowing very well that since people are very much concerned about life and death and God and the meaning of all three, these subjects pay—in cash. Only Mr. Hecht is not quite smart enough to bring it off.

HIS MILIEU is a morgue. His characters embrace a mystical lieutenant of police, symbolically named Balboa, a half-mad corpse-washer, and an assortment of the day's unclaimed bodies. How sad, says the lieutenant, that these people have no names, that no one wants to claim them. After all, they were people too, each with his personal tragedy. The lieutenant is determined to find out who they were.

The corpses help him, and the audience. They talk to each other, and to a wacky sailor-evangelist whose mission has burned down. They tell their stories, in part: one was a broken old woman who jumped out of a window after the spirit of her departed husband; one was an old prostitute; one a young girl who was killed when her neighbor in the rooming house committed suicide; one was a miserly beggar who concealed $40,000 before he froze to death. One was a labor organizer.

Sure. We've met him before. He is loud and brash and atheistic and radical as the devil, but he's no Red, not he! And how do you suppose this bird got knocked off? Well, he died from drinking "smoke" on the Bowery—wood alcohol, the favored bedtime beverage of all good union dock-wallopers. Yoicks and halloo and here we go! The good union man proceeds to organize the spirits of the dead to make demands on God, if there *is* a God, which he doesn't believe. And *if* there is a God, he's a fat banker wearing a silk hat, says he. Where have we heard this sort of stuff before? Echo answers: out of the mouths of babes and Trotskyites.

That miserable sinner, the evangelist, smelling the hidden $40,000, runs off to get it, but instead he gets his just deserts: the crazy corpse-washer shoots him to death and steals the money. The preacher's ghost returns to limbo, chastened by the experience. (The dead beggar has, by this time, dropped dead a second time.) Where is God? says the preacher, He doesn't seem to be anywhere around. Only the union organizer is still in the morgue, having no place else to go—the others have gone to heaven in the meantime.

Where is God? says Mr. Hecht, and answers in the form of a baby spot from the flies, which falls upon the evangelist's concertina and begins to play a tune! The union organizer is convinced; a beatific smile plays on his face. Now he won't have to organize the spirits of the dead after all.

In his long and checkered career Mr. Hecht has been all things to all men, and nothing to any of them. He has been a police reporter, a pornographic novelist, a columnist, a dramatist, a Red-baiter, a scenarist, an anti-Semite, a wisecracker, a cynic. He has made fine capital (not hay) out of the eccentricies of the disinherited, collecting oddities for his "works" from the police blotter and the records of society's many morgues. That old dame jumped out of a window because her husband's ghost had done so first. This old guy didn't like beer, he poured the beer out and chewed up the glass, said it tasted better. Three old bums were found dead in an alley from drinking anti-freeze; or would you like a conversation between three ancient prostitutes sitting in Battery Park? Aren't people fascinating? I love them all.

For Mr. Hecht has been many things; but always he has been a charlatan. So it was distinctly a pity to find so many good performers only temporarily employed. Number among them Will Lee, whose characterization of the corpse-washer, albeit a little overacted, was the one three-dimensional job in the play; Myron McCormick (whose aviator in *Thunder Rock* will be remembered) did the best he could with the labor organizer; Joseph Pevney, who made a personality of the morgue's official photographer, and Minnie Dupree, David Hoffman, and John Philliber as assorted galvanized anatomies. Harry Horner provided a realistic setting for this sickening melee.

Now anyone would think that when a man sits down to write a play, he generally knows what he wants to say. But sometimes it doesn't work out. Witness John Van Druten's latest play, *Solitaire,* which he adapted from Edwin Corle's novel of the same title.

What Mr. Van Druten (or Mr. Corle) had in mind, only they can tell. What came across from the stage was something like this. Living in Pasadena, Calif., is the young girl-child of a bank vice president. Her parents are "modern," but really have no time for their imaginative child. Below their palatial house lies an *arroyo.* In the *arroyo* there lives a tramp named Ben, who harbors a pet rat. Little Virginia, exploring the world, discovers Ben and the rat, whom she names Wickie.

Ben and Virginia hit it off. He is a lovable human being with a distaste for work of any sort, razors, soap, etc. He loves the child, who brings him food pilfered from the overstocked kitchen of the Stewart family. Other "bums" live here as well. Enter the villain of the piece, another hobo who takes over, or attempts to. He makes a soap-box speech in which the author's vulgarized understanding of Communist "propaganda" is stupidly (or cleverly) mixed up with straight Nazi "ideology." The other tramps hate and fear him.

At about this time a sex murder takes place in the neighborhood and the Stewarts find out what their daughter has been up to. The local police burn out the *arroyo,* but little Virginia saves the life of Ben, proves that he is innocent of wrong doing. Are you following?

PERHAPS Mr. Van Druten thought he was writing an allegory about fascism. If so, he might profitably find out what fascism is all about, before attempting another one. You get the symbols—the respectable community living on top, the lumpenproletariat in the lower depths. But someone should tell Mr. Van Druten that fascism is not started from below. Also, he should make up his mind whether he is counseling scientific thinking about the world's problems, or ridiculing science. His bum spouts the purest and most nonsensical sort of propaganda—nothing exists but what is in the mind. Also he pokes fun at his rich folk, who nevertheless turn out to be quite "right" when they tell their child to avoid the lower depths. Such confusion has rarely been seen on our stage this season, and the audience goes home after receiving a liberal dose of the "Communazi" doctrine which is so useful to the minions of Mr. Schicklgruber.

Making her stage debut as Virginia is

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twelve-year-old Pat Hitchcock, daughter of the film director, Alfred. She is a darling, and what is more important, she has real acting talent. As Benny the Bum, Victor Kilian delivers a stunning performance—infinitely sensitive and understanding. Anna Franklin possesses great charm although her role grossly libels the Negro servant she portrays, and the Stewart parents (Sally Bates and Ben Smith) are convincingly stuffed-shirt and stupid. There are a couple of other neat jobs, by Harry Gresham as a feeble-minded tramp, by Frederic Tozere as the villain. Jo Mielziner's sets are brilliant.

But Mr. Van Druten has used the stage—willfully or not—for exactly the wrong purposes: to confuse instead of to enlighten; to muddy the mind with sentiment, instead of illuminating it with emotion. He owes it to his reasonably fair gift for the theater to think his dramas out to a conclusion before he puts them on the lighted platform.

ALVAH BESSIE.

★

THE revival of *Porgy and Bess* (first produced by the Theater Guild in 1935) was greeted with critical fervor by the local reviewers. For a large part these hosannas were justified. The current edition of the Heyward-Gershwin opera is smoother and more mellow than the original. The music has worn well and such old favorites as "Summertime," "It Ain't Necessarily So," "I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'," and "Bess, You Is My Woman Now" were received with the affection befitting an old classic. Indeed several of the critics expressed the opinion that *Porgy and Bess* is the finest cultural representation of the Negro people. It is decidedly not that.

For *Porgy and Bess* is written within the pattern of the traditional operetta, a pattern as rigidly controlled as any scientific formulation. Within this concept, the box-office image of the Negro is maintained intact. He is quaint. He struts, shoots crap, is preoccupied only with love and propitiating the Lord. The plot, of course, is no better than these concepts. Although some of the characters, such as Bess, Porgy, Clara, Jake, Serena, and Maria, achieve a dignity through their singing, there is no characterization, since the operetta strives only for color and spectacle. For this reason there are stretches of dullness despite the lush, ingratiating score.

But if the plotting is burdened by the weight of a dated tradition, the cast certainly is not. From *Shuffle Along* to *Cabin in the Sky,* Negro companies have proved that they can bring a vitality into the theater that gives substance to any production. The cast of *Porgy and Bess* sings and dances with power and authority, from the four-year-old who leads the Orphan Band to the top flight principals. A plot that revealed the aspirations as well as the abilities of the Negro could very easily make *Porgy and Bess* the finest operetta of the American theater.

Many of the original principals are back in the show at the Majestic. These include Anne Brown as Bess, Tod Duncan as Porgy, Harriet Jackson as Clara, Edward Mathews as Jake, Ruby Elzy as Serena, Warren Coleman as Crown, and J. Rosamund Johnson as Lawyer Frazier. The singing of Tod Duncan and Anne Brown is the equal of anything heard on the operettic stage. In "Bess, You Is My Woman Now," this pair enthralled the audience with a poignant, moving duet. Avon Long, a new Sportin' Life, is the evil spirit who sells "happy dust" or dope to the inhabitants of Catfish Row, the community in the deep south where Porgy and Bess and the others live. He dances with the agility and grace of a virtuoso, and his chief number, "It Ain't Necessarily So," is one of the high spots of the show. Two fine bits are produced by Helen Dowdy as the Strawberry Vendor and William Woolfolk as the Crab Man.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

The Week's Films

Mr. Sullivan's curious Travels and Joan of Paris.

LIKE Cleopatra, *Sullivan's Travels* tries to be all things to all men. But Cleopatra had what it takes. Preston Sturges has only cliches; camera cliches, like sharply lighted fights in front of approaching locomotives; emotional cliches in the best girl-loses-boy tradition; and, worst of all, such brash and shallow intellectual generalizations as the smug statement that the best thing you can do for the oppressed is to distract their minds with Mickey Mouse. *Sullivan's Travels* might almost be a collection of the worst scenes in film history; coming from the maker of *The Great McGinty* and *The Lady Eve,* it is a disgusting shock.

It is a haphazard collection of unrelated incidents, each treated in a different (and usually bad) camera style. These incidents are feebly connected by the device of displaying them as the adventures of a movie director in search of Real Life. Sullivan first meets the American people by falling into the clutches of a man-eating widow, from whom he escapes by a rope of knotted sheets. What the improbable widow has to do with the film's theme and plot is also not clear. Thereafter, Sullivan meets Veronica Lake, who is having breakfast in a roadside diner in evening dress. For about half an hour Veronica talks, continuously, in a small nasal monotonous voice. Romance is temporarily interrupted by a sudden sequence of farce, in which no less than four people take turns pushing each other into a swimming pool.

After this and other distractions, Sullivan finally gets his study of human misery under way, assisted by Veronica in boy's clothing (please do not snicker) and by a trailer packed with Hollywood luxuries. I should add that poverty and misery, to Sullivan and Sturges, are only to be found in hobo jungles and in flop-houses; there is apparently no middle ground between the idle rich and the idle poor, and the vast mass of American people who work and worry for their daily bread do not exist for the purposes of this film. Through the flop-houses Joel McCrea and Veronica Lake accordingly wander, to the accompaniment of soft music.

When, at long last, this is over, it is time for the melodramatic style, and Sullivan is promptly slugged on the head, robbed, and mistakenly sentenced to six years on the chain gang. After he is tortured a bit to harrow your feelings, he finds a way of making his identity known. As a big shot from Hollywood, he is rescued from the chain gang; he clasps Veronica to his breast and declares that he has seen the light. He will henceforward film only comedies, to make the chain gang overlook its chains.

This summary does not exhaust the absurdities of *Sullivan's Travels.* The presence of Miss Lake is not the least of them; it takes half an hour to drag her in, she has no real part in the plot, and her only excuse for appearing on the screen at all is unprintable. Then there are showy camera stunts such as flop-houses photographed at unlikely angles, or endless expanses of rails in a railroad yard; decorative stuff in its way, but pointless unless charged with the real and human significance which *Sullivan's Travels* studiously avoids. It is not, however, possible to dismiss this film as a mere tissue of nonsense. For *Sullivan's Travels* declares pompously that it possesses social consciousness and a social philosophy. So it does; and the philosophy more than faintly resembles, say Herbert Hoover's.

Sullivan gets into trouble because he is mistaken for a poor man. All through the chain gang sequence we are invited to be horrified, not because atrocities are inflicted on human beings, but because they are being inflicted, by mistake, on a rich man. Sullivan is a Hollywood director; misery is the proper portion of the poor, not of big shots. And the poor are to be kept in their place by bread and circuses. Are they beaten and starved and exploited? Why, make them laugh; then you can go on beating them safely. If the circus is funny enough, you don't even have to give them bread. *Sullivan's Travels* is the feeblest of entertainment and the shoddiest of thinking.

"JOAN OF PARIS" is far superior to last week's *Paris Calling;* it has fewer sensational improbabilities and it has Michele Morgan. Its photography is often savagely brilliant, its dialogue genuinely moving, and its acting inspired. Yet its reason for existence is still to make you weep over the touching story of a pair of star-crossed lovers. You will weep; love in wartime is a very real and tragic business, and *Joan of Paris* is tragic enough, though not perceptibly real. The notion that sexual love is the only human motive worth centering a film on, however, was never more lamentable than today, when the country is growing sober and the film industry ought to sober up with it.

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Joan is a little French waitress who helps a Free French aviator to escape and is shot by the Gestapo for it. Needless to say, there are innumerable kisses; needless to say, Joan's character is now and then made almost simperingly sweet—she prattles childishly to a miniature statue of Joan of Arc. Most of the Gestapo butchers are similarly prettied up into silky and mysterious spies; the fugitives escape through the crypt of a church and the sewers of Paris. All this melodrama, however, has been directed with restraint and sensitivity. The silent pursuit of the aviator by a Gestapo man is really terrifying. This Nazi agent is played by Alexander Granach, who will be remembered as Danilo in the Soviet film *Gypsies*. Without ever speaking a word, he succeeds in presenting memorable character study; the little man who makes rabbits out of his handkerchief to amuse children, scowls when he loses his suspect, and smirks delightedly when he finds him again, is a person to remember.

Herr Funk, the soft-voiced voluptuary who heads the local Gestapo, is equally vivid in Laird Cregar's hands, and Thomas Mitchell is, as usual, straightforward and convincing in the role of a French priest. The young lovers, moreover, escape the customary nullity of young lovers, for one is the German refugee Paul Henreid, and the other is the French refugee Michele Morgan. When those two speak of freedom, you believe them. They are superb actors too; Hollywood make-up men have played hell with Miss Morgan's eyebrows and smeared her sensitive mouth, but have not lessened her integrity and simplicity.

A keen sense of timing and a subtle mastery of the camera give the film added distinction; it is a pity that *Joan of Paris* had to be disfigured by several shoddy stunts. It begins, unbelievably, with screen credits displayed on the label of a champagne bottle; one can almost hear the producer gurgling "Paris? Ah—champagne!" Then follows the scariest trick ever played on a film audience in wartime; the screen is blacked out, and you are informed that the theater management is relaying a shortwave broadcast—the long-awaited British invasion of the continent is on! This really frightens. The chase sequences are marred by a curious insistence on photographing nothing but feet; ever since Garson Kanin made his brilliant study of two children's feet as they walked home from school (in *The Great Man Votes*) there has been a vague notion in certain Hollywood quarters that photographing feet holds a high mystical and artistic significance—even when the feet are just doing irrelevant walking. Then there is the film's ending, a sentimental melange of clouds and planes, very pretty but quite unnecessary. In spite of these defects, I prefer to remember *Joan of Paris* for the moment when a classroom of small French boys defiantly sings the Marseillaise as the Gestapo men rush through.

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Militant Music

Aaron Copland's "Six Statements for Orchestra."

AARON COPLAND'S "Statements for Orchestra" received its first public presentation recently, when it was played at Carnegie Hall by the Philharmonic Symphony, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. Commissioned by the League of Composers, this work of Copland's was completed in 1935. Why such excellent music was not presented for almost seven years, when there are sixteen major orchestras in America that could have performed it, is one of those mysteries of the national orchestral setup in regard to native contemporary music.

The "Statements" are six. Each is adjectivally titled. In order they are (1) "Militant," (2) "Cryptic," (3) "Dogmatic," (4) "Subjective," (5) "Jingo," (6) "Prophetic." In Mr. Copland's own statement, each title is meant to indicate a "short, terse, orchestral movement of well defined character, lasting about three minutes."

Of course this is the barest description of the music. Undoubtedly Mr. Copland bows to the dictum that music should speak for itself. Which it does, if given half a chance. I first heard the "Statements" at the Philharmonic rehearsal prior to the evening's concert, and my immediate impression was that of superbly wrought music, very much alive and intelligible. Here was music which, without benefit of program notes or titles, could generally be described as cryptic, militant, prophetic. Three minutes is short for a symphonic movement. But with an unusual economy of orchestral means—though not at all unusual with Mr. Copland—he has given each piece a compact roundness. Short, yes; but concise, crisp, each of the statements conveying a clean-cut clarity of thought.

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GOINGS ON

MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE WEEK'S NEWS by JOEL REMES, member Workers School Faculty, Sun., Feb. 8th, 8:30 P.M., Workers School, 35 E. 12th Street. Admission 25 cents.

ROBERT MINOR speaks on "Abraham Lincoln and the New War for Liberation" on Sunday, Feb. 15th, at 7:30 P.M., at Mecca Temple Casino, 133 W. 55th St. Admission 25 cents. Auspices Workers School.

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February

7-28—Saturday Forum Luncheon Group. Lectures every Saturday by well known novelists and critics. Rogers Corner Restaurant, 8th Ave. and 50th St., 12:30 P.M.

8-22—Almanac Singers, Sunday afternoon "Hootenany," new quarters, 430 6th Ave., N. Y. C.

6—League of American Writers. Friday Night Readings from Works in Progress. Robert Carse, Freedom Front, Alfred Kantorowicz, commentator, 237 E. 61st St., 8:30 P.M.

6-8 (inclusive)—NEW MASSES' Mid-Winter Week-End—Plum Point; 53 miles from N. Y.

7—Brownsville Old Timers'-New Timers' Reunion. Full Hour Pageant, Community Ballroom, 128 Watkins St., Bklyn., N. Y.

7—Jewish Musical Alliance, Jewish Music Concert, Cosmopolitan Opera House.

7—Followers of the Trail "V" Cabaret & Dance, benefit Russian War Relief, Fraternal Clubhouse, 110 W. 48th St.

8—Daily Worker, 18th Anniversary, Manhattan Center, 2 P.M.

8—I. W. O. Medical Staff—Night of Stars, Brooklyn Academy of Music.

13—I. W. O. West Side Forum, A. B. Magil on "Three Crises in American History," 220 W. 80th St., N. Y. C., 9 P.M.

13-21—Labor's Bazaar to Defend America. Benefit British, Russian, Chinese War Relief and Amer. Red Cross—Entertainers of each nation, 100 2nd Ave., N. Y. C.

15—Workers School, Robert Minor on "Lincoln and the New War for Liberation," Mecca Temple Casino, 7:30 P.M.

20—League of American Writers, Friday Night Readings from Works in Progress. Ben Field, novel on farm life. Mother Ella Reeves Bloor, commentator, 237 E. 61st St., 8:30 P.M.

21—Unity Reunion Dance, Preview 1942, Webster Hall.

21—Oklahoma Book Sale. Benefit Oklahoma Book Trials. Place to be announced.

22—ALP—2nd Annual Liberty Ball, Royal Windsor.

25—Citizens Comm. to Free Earl Browder, Testimonial Dinner to Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Aldine Club, 200 5th Ave., N. Y. C.

27—Russian War Relief—Dance Recital, Paul Draper, Haakon, Robinson, etc. Carnegie Hall.

28—International Juridical Assoc. 10th Anniv. Dinner, Hotel Murray Hill.

March

1—Veterans Abraham Lincoln Brigade—Dinner, Memorial Division, Hotel Diplomat.

6—Soviet Russia Today, 10th Anniversary Banquet, Program, place to be announced.

15—NEW MASSES' Lincoln Steffens Memorial Tribute Meeting. Sun. afternoon, 2 P.M., Manhattan Center.

28—Veterans Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Spring Dance, Webster Hall.

29—Annual I. W. O. Pageant and Dance, Paul Robeson, Guest Artist, Manhattan Center, 7:30 P.M.

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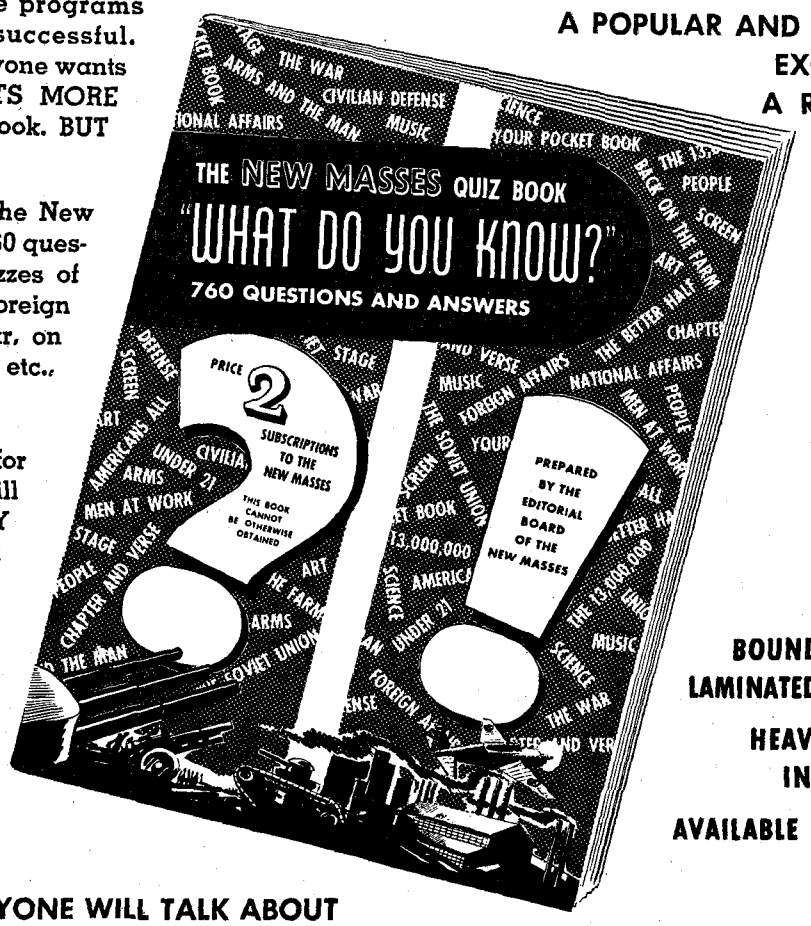
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